

DEVELOPING A METHOD TO CELEBRATE THE GIFTS THAT GOD
HAS GIVEN WOMEN PREACHERS IN THE NATIONAL BAPTIST
CONVENTION USA, INC.

James A. Nooks, D.Min.

BSCHE, University of Dayton, 1974
MA, Central Michigan University, 1986
M.Div., Payne Theological Seminary, 2003

Mentor

Robert Walker, D.Min.

Linda Thomas, Ph.D

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James A. Nooks

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Mentor

Robert Walker, D.Min.

Linda Thomas, Ph.D

Date: _____

Approved:

Mentor(s)

Dean, Doctoral Studies

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A METHOD TO CELEBRATE THE GIFTS THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO WOMEN PREACHERS IN THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION USA, INC.

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The focus of the project was to develop a model to teach churches to celebrate the gifts that God has given to women preachers and to take leadership roles in the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (NBC, Inc.) The data was gathered from March to November of 2004, from answers to survey and interview questions. The methodology employed was to survey people in the NBC, Inc, interview women preachers, and conduct a conference on women preachers. The project concludes that the Bible validates the leadership of women and that many people in the NBC, Inc. are supportive of women preachers.

DEDICATIONS

I would like to acknowledge my wife, Tonya , my daughters Angela, Kisha, Anita, Amy, Breana, and Gabrielle for all of the support that they have given me through the years. I would like to acknowledge the struggle that my wife Tonya, and daughters Kisha and Amy have endured in pursuing their ministries. I want to encourage you to let God use you.

I would also like to thank my mentors, Dr. Robert Walker, Dr. Pauline Puckett, and Dr. Linda Thomas for your guidance and support. You are appreciated. I would like to thank my peer group, context associates and professional associates for the assistance and help that they provided in the completion of this project.

I would like to acknowledge my sisters in the ministry in the Dayton, Springfield, and Xenia areas. Again, I encourage you to be strong in the Lord.

I would like to encourage my brothers in the ministry to become mentors and active participants in helping to promote the cause of Christ, and engage in constructive dialog concerning the issue of women preachers. The church needs the gifts that God has provided to us through many of our sisters.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	American Baptist Churches, USA
B.C.E.	Before Common Era
C.E.	Common Era
KJV	King James Version of the Bible
MBC	Missionary Baptist Convention
NBC	National Baptist Convention
NBCA	National Baptist Convention of America
NBC, Inc.	National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.
NIV	New International Version of the Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
PBC	Progressive Baptist Convention
RSV	Revised Standard Version of the Bible

INTRODUCTION

If a man may preach, because the savior died for him, why not the woman? Seeing he died for her also. Is he not a whole Savior, instead of a half one? As those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear.¹

-Jareena Lee

This quote was extracted from the writings of a woman preacher that blazed a new trail for women preachers in this country late in the 19th century. She stood up against the opposition of traditional interpretations of scripture and a culture that subjugated women. Bettye Collier-Thomas in her book entitled *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979* states:

Black women who preach have not been as scarce as the historical literature on women, religion, and African Americans has suggested. Although women who preach have not been and still are not widely recognized in mainstream Christianity as the equals of male preachers, they have continued to come forth and to pursue the prize—the pulpit. In doing so, they have been singular heroes and powerful actors in the struggle for black empowerment, especially the empowerment of black women.²

Although Jareena Lee's quote is from the 19th century, it is still applicable to the lives of many today. This paper is in support of women preachers. If God calls someone to preach, who am I to second-guess God?

¹ Bettye Collier-Thomas, *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979* (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 11.

² Ibid.

Several years ago my daughter, Amy, informed me that she had been called to preach. Her proclamation did not come as a surprise to me. I had observed her actions and noticed that she had been changed. Tonya, my wife, had been called to preach prior to our getting married, five years ago, however, she had made a decision not to pursue her calling. She could not honor that decision, after a period of time. I never wanted or expected her to stop exercising the gift that God had given her. I knew that the day would come, when I would have to make a stand concerning the issue of women preachers. That day had arrived.

For years I lived with an embedded conflict. The obvious demeaning of and the assumed subjugation of women by some men troubled my spirit. The Bible was held up as proof of being in support of and in opposition to women preachers.

Reflecting on the scriptures and the cultural influences that spawned text like 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2, I have arrived at the conclusion that injustice has been imposed upon many of my sisters in the ministry. There is a gender imbalance in the scales of justice regarding who should preach and hold leadership positions in the church. I believe the church and the Black Community are suffering as a result of this injustice.

To address this injustice I have undertaken a project to attempt to alleviate the weight of the injustice. The objective of this project is to develop a model to teach churches to celebrate the gifts that God has given to women to preach and/or take leadership roles in the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. (NBC, Inc.).

The peer group that I am a part of is focused on urban development and intercultural communication. The black Baptist church is a part of the Black community. The Black community is affected by what happens in the black Baptist church. Urban or

suburban development in the Black community is influenced by what happens in the black Baptist church. This project, "Celebrating the Gifts that God has Given To Women Preachers in the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.," is an attempt to move the scales of justice toward being balanced for many women preachers in the black Baptist church, and support the development of the Black community and enhance intercultural communication.

The project that I have undertaken is an example of ethnography. Evaluating the NBC, Inc. concerning the issue of women preachers is a study of the Black community. The Black community is a product of Black culture. I have learned from books like, *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*, by Michael H. Agar, that Ethnography deals with reading cultures. This project has attempted to understand more about the Black culture and the culture of the black Baptist church. One result of conducting this project has been for me to understand and appreciate the differences of opinion concerning women preachers in the Black community and as a result of the understanding gained, I have learned more about myself.

I am a part of the Black community, and how women preachers are treated in the NBC, Inc. and the Black community affects me. I am not a distant observer. The questions that were asked in the interview sessions and the survey were relative to the Black community and the NBC, Inc. The fieldwork that I conducted allowed me to hear from people in the Black community. I was informed by the stories of the founding of First Baptist in Yellow Springs, Ohio. I learned how people feel about the controversial issue of women preachers. The interview sessions allowed me to hear directly from

women that are living through the results of different interpretations of scripture as well as traditional norms.

It is clear that we all need each other. The gifts that God has given to women preachers should not be diminished or limited in any way. If our communities are to develop, we need the contributions of all people. Reflecting on the text, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* by John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, the message from the book supports the effort to recognize the gifts that God has given to women preachers in the black Baptist church. If we do not recognize these gifts we limit the potential of the women preachers as well as those that might be influenced by their gifts. Those influenced by the gifts of women preachers could be the entire Black community.

Celebrating the gifts of women in the NBC, Inc. will aid in the liberation of women, which will assist in empowering women to contribute more to the development of communities. It will also enhance intercultural communication within the Black community and the black Baptist church. The critical issue of recognizing the women that God has called to preach has not been discussed openly enough. There are cultures within cultures. Within the Black culture there are those that are in support of and opposed to women preaching. One of the major goals of the project that I have undertaken attempts to bridge the communication gap concerning the issue and enhance intercultural communication.

My hypothesis for the project was:

How can I improve the cultural communications within the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. and the black community, using First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio as an example in the development of a method(s) that enhances the

celebration and respect for the differences in people, focusing on the issue of women preachers, in an attempt to break down some barriers that oppress and limit the contributions of women, in yielding a more effective witness for the church in their attempt to make disciples and improve the community?

The foundations for this project were, (1) the Bible is in support of women preachers, (2) the cultural conditions that spawned text like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 should not be applied to the black Baptist Church, and (3) theologically, people (men and women) that have been called to preach should answer that call.

I believe that the difficulty that some women have in answering their call to preach or hold leadership positions in the black Baptist Church can be reduced through (1) listening to the stories of women ministers and preachers that are in the black Baptist Church and those that left to answer their call, (2) hearing from the people of the black Baptist Church, because the people may not be in agreement with some of the pastors on the issue, (3) reviewing, critically, the scriptures concerning women in leadership positions in the Bible, (4) analyzing texts that appear to be supportive of the subjugation of women like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12, and (5) evaluating the culture that existed at the time of the writing of the aforementioned texts. I believe that if there can be an open critical examination of the facts, the condition for many women in the black Baptist Church can be improved.

To test my hypothesis I have, (1) had surveys completed by four black Baptist churches, (2) conducted interviews with eleven women preachers that are currently in the black Baptist Church or have left to answer their call, and (3) hosted a conference on women preachers.

In chapter one of the paper the ministry's narrow focus was identified as First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The broader focus was identified as the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. I have a personal interest in the issue of women preachers, because I have two daughters that have been called to the ministry and my wife is also a called minister. Both my wife and one of my daughters were licensed to preach in the church where I pastor, causing me to have a further concern with the issue. The concern about the church where I pastor was due to the fact that there were those that were in opposition to the licensing of women preachers. In chapter one I also expressed a concern for the NBC, Inc., because there is no written policy in support of or against women preachers at the national level. However, there are state and local policies that limit the effectiveness of the ministry of many women. I believe the limiting of the potential of many women hurts the NBC, Inc. and the black community.

In chapter two voices were identified that focused on, (1) the interpretation of scripture, (2) the affect of culture and history on scripture, (3) the black Baptist church, (4) complimentarianism and egalitarianism, and (5) theology. To study scripture without considering the cultural and historical affects limits our knowledge and understanding. Different voices and perspectives are welcomed participants at the table where ideas are exchanged and heard.

In chapter three the Biblical, historical and theological support information was identified and analyzed. Chapter two introduced the writers, and chapter three expounded upon the pertinent writings and concepts. The Old Testament and New Testament scriptures in support of and against women preachers were investigated. Information concerning complimentarianism (fundamentalism) and egalitarianism were

presented. The Biblical and cultural interpretations of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 were also investigated.

In chapter four the methodology employed in the field experience was discussed. Three methods were used, (1) a survey was conducted of four black Baptist churches, (2) eleven women preachers were interviewed, and (3) a conference on women preachers was conducted at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The data obtained is analyzed qualitatively.

In chapter five the details of the field experience were expounded. The implementation of the methodology during the surveying, the interviewing and the sharing during the conference on women preachers was explained. The data was presented and analyzed.

Chapter six summarized the results and provided reflections and conclusions. The survey that was taken by members of four churches and the participants in the conference on women preachers, the interviews of the eleven women preachers, and the conference on women preachers helped to celebrate the gifts that God has given some women preachers in the black Baptist church.

The area of focus of the peer group that I am a part of was intercultural communication and urban development. The conference on women preachers, teaching on the issue of women preachers, and the messages from the women preachers that were interviewed aided in enhancing communication on the issue of women preachers. The communication that was enhanced by the project was intercultural, because it helped to break down the wall of silence that has existed in discussing this subject openly.

The issue of urban development was addressed by efforts to improve the black community. The development of the black community was enhanced by the project. While the black community is not all urban, the issue of urban development is closely aligned with the development of the black community. The black community was improved or developed by striving to meet the project goal to celebrate the gifts that God has given to women preachers in the NBC, Inc. The majority of the participants in the surveys agreed that there was a connection between the treatment of women and the development of the black community.

The communication process was enhanced in the Black community in the Xenia, Springfield, and Dayton, Ohio areas, because the level of understanding was enhanced for some people in the area.

Chapter six also outlines additional steps that can be taken to help the NBC, Inc. and others to educate and communicate issues associated with the issue of women preachers. The results of the project gave credence to the fact that there exists the possibility that the issues associated with women preaching or taking and holding other leadership positions in the church may not only be the result of interpretations of scripture. The issues may be linked to culture and tradition. The claim that scripture causes the controversy may not be the total story. What stands in the balance are many talented, called women that may be limited in their ability to share their gifts. We begin the paper by explaining the ministry focus.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

The area of ministry that was addressed in this paper was, women preachers in the black Baptist church. The primary context of this paper was First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The church is affiliated with the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. (NBC, Inc.) and the American Baptist Churches USA (ABC). The church is predominantly Black, claiming its roots from former slaves.

The larger context that this paper addressed was the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. (NBC, Inc). The NBC, Inc. is one of the four major conventions that originated from the National Baptist Convention (NBC) that was formed in 1895. The other three conventions are, (1) the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. (NBCA), (2) the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC), and (3) the National Missionary Baptist Convention (NMBC). None of these bodies has a national policy on women preachers. While the PNBC is more supportive of women preachers, there are no policies of support on the national level. I have chosen the NBC, Inc. as the larger context, because First Baptist in Yellow Springs is affiliated with that convention.

The objective of this paper is to develop a model to teach churches to celebrate the gifts that God has given to women to preach and/or take leadership roles in the NBC, Inc. Celebrating the gifts of women in the NBC, Inc. will aid in the liberation of women,

which will assist in empowering women to contribute more to the development of black communities.

It is my contention that black women in the historically black Baptist church have been shackled with the cuffs of tradition veiled in a false interpretation of scripture. The scriptures that are quoted in support of denying women the pulpit, such as 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:34-45 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15, have been attributed to Paul. Many that hold to the position that women should not preach quote scriptures such as the ones mentioned above as the source of their position. If they would look a little further into the scriptures, they would find that the Bible contains evidence to support the position that women have and can preach.

As we approach the issue of women preaching in the black Baptist church, it is important to establish a definition of preaching. Donald L. Hamilton from his book, *Homiletic Handbook* states, "The biblical concept of preaching is centered in one word from the Old Testament and four words from the New Testament. The Old Testament word is *naba*, which translated into English means "prophesy"; it is used over 110 times. In the New Testament we find *kerusso* ("to proclaim," about 60 times), *euangelizo* ("to declare good news," 50 times), *kataggello* ("to tell thoroughly," 17 times), and *didasko* ("to teach," 97 times). In addition, the New Testament word *parakaleo* ("to beseech, comfort, exhort," 103 times) is sometimes used in the sense of preaching, although this is not its usual meaning."¹

Although distinctions have been sought between preaching and teaching the application of preaching and the cultural context influence whether there is a distinction

¹ Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletic Handbook* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1992) 10-11.

or not. In some circles, a topical treatment of the text has been called preaching, while an expository treatment of a passage is said to be teaching.² In other circles, the term teacher appears to be too dogmatic, and the culture prefers teacher to preacher.³ On the issue of clarifying the difference between “preaching” and “teaching,” Hamilton asks the questions, “Is the supposed difference based on the seating arrangement of the room, the bodily posture of the teacher or preacher, the use of voice, the degree and nature of the audience’s participation, the way the passage of Scripture is being handled, the sex of the person doing the talking, or the formality or informality of the setting?”⁴

To explain what preaching is, we have to leave the Biblical and look to tradition and culture. Traditionally preaching has been in the mode of making a speech. It generally deals with a sermon. Most preaching will be carried out as a monologue with little or no interruption.

A definition offered by J. Daniel Baumann is, “Preaching is the communication of biblical truth by man to men with the explicit purpose of eliciting behavioral change.”⁵ It is disturbing that a definition of preaching would mutually exclude women from preaching.

However, some people do not take the time to sort through definitions when it comes to preaching. To most people a preacher is the one that holds leadership roles in the church. The preacher could be the one that stands up to exhort on Sunday morning, the one that carries out the administration of the church, one that prophesies, teaches at

² Ibid., 11.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵ Ibid., 13.

Bible study, marches against injustice, writes books, or performs marriages or funerals. They may also be bishops or presiding elders that do not preach every Sunday. A leader in the church may do one or all of the aforementioned functions. For the purpose of this paper I am going to define preacher as one that can do one or all of the items mentioned. In this paper, I will use the term “women preachers” to describe women ministers, deacons, preachers, pastors, and various leadership positions in the church.⁶

I chose to address the issue of women preaching in the black Baptist church because (1) It was a personal issue for me, (2) it was an issue in First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio, where I pastor and (3) it was an issue in the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. I will begin by discussing how the project was a personal issue.

The issue of women preaching in the black Baptist church was a personal issue, because I have family members that are women preachers. Consequently, I have changed my position in the past few years concerning the subject of women preachers. My position has moved from one of support to advocacy. Whereas I realize the fact that women have their own voice that must be expressed, many men must begin to stand up for the necessity of women to preach or to express the talents that God has given them.

I haven't always been an advocate of women preachers. Growing up as a black Baptist I accepted what was the norm concerning women in the church. In Middlerun Baptist Church there were women Sunday school teachers, missionaries, musicians, and ushers. The men were the trustees, deacons, preachers and pastors. While men could do

⁶ This is a definition of preaching that I have given for this paper. The definition is derived from my perception of what people in the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. would define a preacher to be. I arrive at this definition, because I have been an officer in the Ohio Baptist General Convention for seven years and in the Western Union Baptist Association for four years. I have also been a pastor of a Baptist church that has been a member of both of the associations mentioned above for nine years. The Western Union Baptist District Association is a part of the Ohio Baptist Convention and the Ohio Baptist General Convention is a part of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc.

the same jobs as the women, the women did not become trustees, deacons, preachers and pastors in Middlerun Baptist church. It was understood that there was a line which women did not transcend. On the other side of that line was a world established for and maintained by and for men. I was a part of this culture of exclusivity, yet I did not understand the hierarchical structure that was in place.

It was not until I was a teenager that I realized that there was a different norm in place in other churches. I began singing in a youth community choir that was based in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) when I saw women stewards, preachers and pastors. Observing women in the different roles seemed natural to me. It was the 60's. The cause was civil rights, the culture was one of resistance, "afro hair" styles were in vogue, and the phrase "black power" flowed from the souls and lips of many Black people in the United States. I was young and less hardened as many males that were my seniors concerning the issue of women preachers. I sang in that choir for several years, and eventually became a member of the United A.M.E. church. I remained a member for 8 years.

In my late 20's my soul became troubled over the issue of women preachers. Perhaps my consciousness had not been pricked because, the pain of gender bias had not inflicted someone close enough to me. After moving from Xenia, Ohio to Springfield, Ohio, I became a member of a Baptist church once again. Expressions like, "She won't sit in my pulpit," "We can't have a woman teaching the men," and "That's not a woman's place" churned my stomach and troubled my conscience. I was in a Middlerun Baptist Church culture with an AME experience and a soul that clamored for justice and understanding. Many preachers that I came into contact with felt that it was acceptable

for them to run down women in my presence. Words were spoken in the company of men that were not spoken when women were present.

I engaged in a quiet resistance much like Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea until the issue of women preachers touched me through my family. My wife was already a preacher when I met her, yet she was clear that she did not want to share the pulpit with me. She wanted to be my wife and support me. Her position changed over time. The call that was on her life was too compelling. It was and is like fire shut up in her bones. I struggled with how she must feel, knowing that she was called by God and being in a church that was, at best, reluctant to accept women preachers.

My daughter, Kisha, is a prophetess. She has operated in that gift for many years. Kisha did not attend First Baptist at the time that I began to address the issue of women preaching in the black Baptist church. Therefore, her ministry was not an issue at First Baptist Church. However, my daughter Amy's call to the ministry, became a major issue at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Nearly three years ago my daughter, Amy, acknowledged her call to me. She and a woman friend of hers were reluctant to acknowledge their calls to the ministry, because they felt they would not be accepted, as ministers, in the church where I was the pastor. I advised my daughter, her friend and my wife that I wanted to take their names forward to the deacon board in the hopes that the board would recommend them to the church to be licensed. In the initial meeting with the deacon board I decided to hold classes on women in ministry, because I could see the confusion, doubt and reluctance on their part concerning the issue of women preachers.

In a historic church meeting my wife, Tonya, my daughter, Amy, and another woman, Ramee Linton, that had been recommended by me for licensing were, in fact, licensed. Although the three women were licensed by the church, some members took actions to defy the licensing of the women. Secret meetings were called to boycott the morning service, and plans were laid to defy the pastor and not support the women preachers. When the name of another woman preacher was put before the church body, approximately six months later, the church voted down her licensing. Subsequently, that person left First Baptist. The issue of women preaching remains an issue at First Baptist in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

The issue of women preaching in the black Baptist church was an issue for First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio, which is my primary context. The licensing of three women and the voting down of another is reflective of the conflict that arose in First Baptist as a result of two issues. The one was the issue of women preaching. The other was the issue of worship style and the exercising of the gifts of the spirit. This paper will address the first issue of women preachers. To gain an understanding of why these issues would have caused conflict in First Baptist Church, we need to understand more about the church.

Between the forming of the first black Baptist association in this country and the forming of the National Baptist Convention of America, First Baptist Church of Yellow Springs, Ohio was formed in 1864.⁷ It was formerly known as Zion Baptist Church⁸ and the Anti-Slavery Baptist Church.⁹

⁷ Isabel Newman, ed., *History of the First Baptist Church of Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1863-1994*, (1994), 25.

⁸ Ibid.

the Anti-Slavery Baptist Church.⁹ In 1862 a train arrived in Yellow Springs carrying the Rev. Moncure Conway and a group of former slaves.¹⁰ Conway had gone to Virginia and Washington D.C. to lead 31 of the slaves that his father had owned to freedom.¹¹

Conway was an abolitionist and a Unitarian minister. Two of the former slaves that had made it to the Georgetown community of Washington D.C. were Eliza and Dunmore Gwinn. The Gwinns would come to lead a settlement of former slaves in Yellow Springs, Ohio, known as the "Conway Colony,"¹² and help organize First Baptist church.¹³

The worship service of the church, formed by the Conway slaves, appears to have been similar to those that were typical of the "invisible institution" of the South. Moncure Conway referred to the congregation of First Baptist church as "shouting Methodists" when he visited the church several years after it had been founded.¹⁴ Eliza Gwinn was noted for her passionate prayers.¹⁵ Julia Gwinn, the sister of Dunmore was a

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *The Free Lance-Star*, "Moncure Conway Timeline" (February 2, 2002, accessed 13 May 2004); available from; <http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2002/022002/02022002/504443/index.html>; Internet.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Robert Mihalek, *The Journey of the Conway Colony*, *The Yellow Springs News*, (May 2002, accessed 13 May 2004); available from; <http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2002/022002/02022002/504443/index.html>; Internet.

¹³ Ibid. 7.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

part of the settlement.¹⁶ Julia Gwinn's daughter, Evaline Gwinn Morris was an ancestor to many of the existing members of First Baptist Church.¹⁷

There were two reasons why Moncure Conway chose Yellow Springs as a place for the former slaves of his father to settle; (1) his friend Horace Mann was the president of Antioch College,¹⁸ which was located in Yellow Springs and (2) Conway had friends, in the village that would provide land.¹⁹

The Antioch College quotes the final words of Horace Mann in his last commencement address in 1859: "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity."²⁰ The *Yellow Springs*, a weekly newspaper states, "The seeds of tolerance-for all regardless of race-were planted in 1853 when Mann, a former congressman and abolitionist, came to Yellow Springs to lead a new nonsectarian college founded by the Unitarians.

Yellow Springs is a college town of 4,000 people. The local population is increased by about 500 due to the students at Antioch College. The village is still considered to be liberal just as it was in the 1800's.

Now that we have evaluated some of the demographics of the village, we turn our attention to reviewing the history of First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. First Baptist has been impacted by many factors. In this section of the paper, we investigate

¹⁶ Ibid., 2.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Michael McPherson, "About Antioch College" in *The Antioch College*: (accessed 6 April 2003): available from <http://www.Antioch-college.edu/aboutantioch.html>: 2; Internet.

¹⁹ Judith Jones, "Sowing Seeds of Freedom", *Free Lance-Star* (February 9, 2002, accessed 23 April 2003): available from <http://fredericksburg.com/Mews/FLS/2002/022002/02092002/503791/index.html>: 7; Internet;.

²⁰ Michael McPherson, "About Antioch College," 1.

(1) the age of the members, and (2) the understanding that the members have concerning the inerrancy of the Bible. One's understanding of the inerrancy of the Bible is a major factor in addressing the issue of women preachers in the black Baptist church.

The age of the membership is considered in the paper, because there may be a tendency for younger members to be more tolerant concerning the issue of women preachers. The age of the membership of First Baptist has changed since I became pastor eleven years ago. While there were no statistics kept, the comment was often made that the majority of the membership was over 65 years of age. Reviewing Figure 1 below, it is clear that those over 65 are not the majority of the congregation. While 33% of the members of the congregation are over 61, the second largest group of congregants is between the age of 31 and 50. The age distribution of the church shows that 59% of the congregants are 50 years of age or under. The age distribution may help explain some of the issues that the church is encountering in worship and doctrine, because age tends to be a factor in those issues.

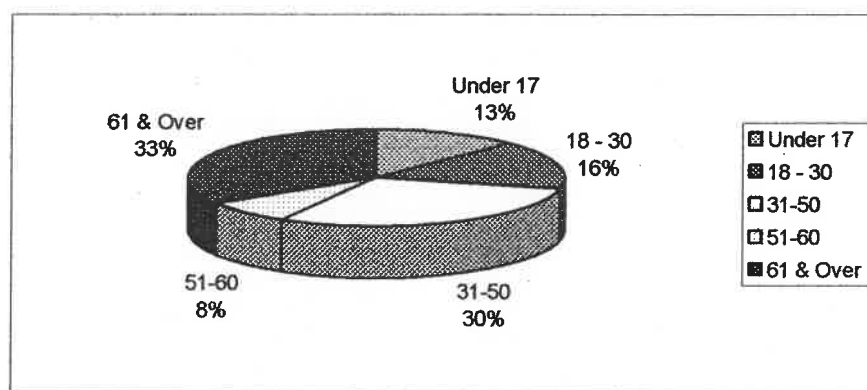


Figure 1. Age of the Members of First Baptist in Yellow Springs, Ohio

The position that the membership takes on the inerrancy of the Bible was a key issue in addressing the issue of women preachers in the black Baptist church. The more traditional position (fundamentalist) accepts a literal, English translation, and a universally applied interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12. It may be unfair to stereotype all people either as fundamentalist or not, but the less traditional position views these texts in context and does not apply them universally to all time and every situation.

First Baptist, like the corporate Church, does not have “one voice” concerning the interpretation of scripture. If I could remove all the smoke, the inerrancy of the Bible would be at the center of most discussions and issues concerning women preachers. There are a few that understand and adhere to a fundamentalist position concerning the inerrancy of the Bible, like the Southern Baptists. However, most of the congregants are not aware of the fundamentalist, evangelical or liberal positions. It is the “correct interpretation” of the Bible or a person’s position on the “inerrant word of God” that has fueled debates and severed relationships.

It is the interpretation of the Bible by fundamentalists as the inerrant word of God that has been the cause of confusion in many churches, including First Baptist. Albert G. Miller states, “More precisely, fundamentalists, drawing from the conservative Princeton Seminary theologians, asserted that the Bible was “inerrant,” meaning that the Bible, “when correctly interpreted, is “truthful,” regardless of the topic it broaches, whether in the area of doctrine, creed, ethics, or history and the natural world.”²¹ The problem with

²¹ Albert G. Miller, “The Construction of a Black Fundamentalist Worldview: The Role of Bible Schools” in *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Text and Social Textures*, ed. Vincent L. Winbush (New York, New York: Continuum International, 2000), 714.

the view of some fundamentalists concerning the inerrancy of the Bible is that they believe that they have “the correct” interpretation.

After reviewing the fact that women preachers is an issue for First Baptist Church, we turn our attention to the NBC, Inc. The NBC, Inc. has no clear, documented position on the issue of women preachers. Different voices have emerged regarding the issue of women preachers. The concept of women preachers is a theological issue, because the church has not arrived at a consensus in the debate.²² The debate still continues within the black Baptist church.

C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, in *The Black Church in the African American Experience* state, “Ostensibly in defense of the authority and autonomy of local churches, none of the national conventions has taken a formal stand either for or against the ordination of women.”²³ Not having a clear policy on the issue of women preachers has caused some confusion among black Baptist churches.

While some might imply that there is confusion over the issue of women preachers, still others would say that there is no confusion about the oppression that women preachers experience in the NBC, Inc. Lincoln and Mamiya state:

While there is no specific policy against the ordination of women in any of the black Baptist denominations, the general climate has not been supportive of women preaching, and pastoring churches. In recent years, however, there has been a small minority of black clergymen who have sponsored women candidates for ordination in their associations. The Baptist principal of congregational autonomy has been helpful in these cases since the independence

²² James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 9.

²³ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 44.

of each church and pastor cannot be challenged by any denominational authority.²⁴

By having no written statement, at the national level of the black Baptist church conventions, it is difficult to address the issue. Even though there is no official written position on women preachers in the NBC, Inc., there is an unwritten rule of subjugation. The unwritten position of the black Baptist church is similar to the written position of the Southern Baptist Convention on women preachers.

The official position of the Southern Baptist Convention on women in ministry is as follows:

Women participate equally with men in the priesthood of all believers. Their role is crucial, their wisdom, grace and commitment exemplary, women are an integral part of our Southern Baptist boards, faculties, mission teams, writer pools, and professional staffs. We affirm and celebrate their great commission impact.

While scripture teaches that a woman's role is not identical to that of men in every respect, and that pastoral leadership is assigned to men, it also teaches that women are equal in value to men.²⁵

The black community needs the talents of many women that are a part of the black church. Some in the black church have aligned with a system that purports that women are not allowed to preach. It is this system that has helped to limit the contributions that many black women have made to the church and the black community. The black church is a part of the black culture. Black women in the black church comprise a large part of the church; however, their voices

²⁴ Fusilier, editor, "National Baptist Convention U.S.A.," 287.

²⁵ "Women in Ministry," in *SBC Position Statements-Women in Ministry*, (2004, accessed 10 March 2003); available from <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/pswomen.asp>; Internet.

have been suppressed by a system that attempts to silence them. Developing a method(s) to help the voices of black women to be heard will enhance cultural communication and urban development.

At a minimum, cultural communication can be improved by hearing from many women that have been called by God to preach. Developing and implementing a method(s) to be applied within the black Baptist church will help cultural communications within the context of the black church. Such communication is needed for the health and growth of the black church. Implementing a method(s) that enhances the liberation of some women from a system of oppression will promote communication and involvement in other areas of the black community as well.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN WOMEN IN MINISTRY

The faith of different churches and individuals is seeking an understanding concerning the issue of women preachers. Beck and Blomberg state, “At the present time the issue is far from settled and the discussion still incomplete. Those on either side who think otherwise and declare ‘victory’ are premature.”¹ There are many voices to be heard to begin to understand the issue. In this section of the paper, we reviewed a listing of some of the voices associated with (1) the biblical interpretation of pertinent texts, (2) the historical and cultural implications associated with the writing of the texts, (3) the history of the black Baptist church, (4) complimentary and egalitarian positions, and (5) different theological positions. We begin by hearing the names of the voices associated with the Biblical interpretation of pertinent texts.

Biblical Interpretation of Pertinent Texts

At the center of every discussion regarding whether women should preach or hold leadership positions in the church are the interpretations of texts like 1 Timothy 2:11-12, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and Galatians 3:28, Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 2:18-22, Genesis 3:16 and Joel 2:28.

¹ James R. Beck, and Craig L. Blomberg. *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 13.

If 1 Timothy 2:11-12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 are taken literally and applied universally, then one would draw the conclusion that, in fact, women are not to preach. In fact, a literal interpretation of the KJV of the text applied universally, would impose a gag rule upon all women of the church, not allowing them to speak. But is a literal and universal interpretation of the scriptures appropriate? My contention is that accepting such a position robs us of the truth of the text. The context of the text must be considered. The black Baptist church does not come out of first or second century Corinth or Ephesus, which are the contexts of 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2. The Corinthian passage was written to an emerging Christian church that lacked control.² The Timothy passage was written to a church that was strongly influenced by false teaching, believed to have been Gnosticism. The church at Ephesus also had a faction of people that were supportive of the domination of females.³ The cultures of the early Corinthian and Ephesian churches were not the same as our culture is today, concerning women.⁴ In point of fact, the cultures of these churches varied from that of the early house churches that were started by Paul and many of his followers.

In order to understand the biblical interpretation of pertinent texts, we reviewed *An Introduction to the New Testament* by Raymond E. Brown, who is a more traditional scholar, and *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New testament Criticism* by Brian K.

² Gerd Thiessen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1982), 17.

³ Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), p. 50.

⁴ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, Second Edition, Volume 2* ed. Everett Ferguson (New York, New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 1182.

Blount, and *What Paul Really said about Women* by John Temple Bristow, who are more contemporary scholars.

The “fall” is critical to any discussion concerning women. Therefore, we studied texts that analyzed Genesis. Phyllis Tribble’s writing entitled *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* along with other writers concerning the “fall.”

Several works were referred to in an effort to interpret 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. Those works were “Women, Text and the Canon: The Strange Case of 1 Corinthians 14:35” by Winsome Munro, “In defense of an Egalitarian Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-36: A Reply to Murphy-O’Connor’s Critique” by David Odell-Scott, “Dissertation: A Discourse Analysis of 1 Corinthians, Situation and Background, The City of Corinth” by Ralph Bruce Terry, and “The Theology of Woman’s Place” and the “Paulinist” Tradition” in *Semeia, The Bible and Feminist Hermeneutic* No. 28, 1993 by William O. Walker.

The Pastorals and 1 Timothy 2:11-12, in particular, were investigated and analyzed. The works that were referred to were. *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* by Richard Clark and Catherine Kroeger, “The Pastoral Epistles” in *Searching the Scriptures: Volume Two: A Feminist Community* by Linda M. Maloney and *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* by Aida Besancon Spencer.

A biblical perspective of the text, without including an analysis of the culture would be incomplete. Therefore, next we look at the cultural of the New Testament.

Historical and Cultural Implications

The context out of which the scriptures were written, the purpose for the writing and the intended audience must be considered in evaluating text. All of the aforementioned items are a part of the culture of first and second century Corinth and Ephesus. Culture effects how people act and write. The hierarchical structure of the prevailing culture in first and second century Corinth and Ephesus was one that elevated the man and subjugated the woman. The cultural hierarchical structure became known as the *Haustafeln* code.⁵ The early church embraced this structure that was born out of Hellenization. The Western world adopted the hierarchical structure that the early church embraced.⁶

There are many scholars that help us to view the New Testament world from a cultural perspective. The cultural view helps us to see what may have shaped some of the writing and thinking of the world that Paul knew. Bruce J. Madina, in his book, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, and Gerd Thiessen in his book *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* helps to reveal the culture of the New Testament world.

In the second century a group emerged called the Montanists. The leadership of the group included two women. Elizabeth A. Clark states:

Catholic Christianity's wish to distinguish itself from sects that it deemed either schismatic or heretical provided another reason for church authorities to limit women's roles, since some of these sects

⁵ Clarice J. Martin, "The *Haustafeln* (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: Free Slaves and Subordinate Women" in *Stony the Rode We Trod*, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress press, 1991), 208.

⁶ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women* (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 3.

permitted higher positions of leadership to women. Two women prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla, were hailed by Montanists as among their founders and were said to enjoy direct revelations of the Holy Spirit (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 8.12; Eusebius, *H.E.* 5.16). Montanist women may also have baptized and celebrated the Eucharist (Cyprian, *Ep.* 75[74].10; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 49.2). And some Gnostic groups, according to the church fathers, allowed women to serve as priests and to baptize (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 6.35; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.12.1-2; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 42.4; Tertullian, *Praeser.* 41). Catholic women were thus told not to seek such offices.⁷

From the above statement, it would follow that some of the early female preachers outside the Bible would be Montanist or Gnostic. Both Priscilla and Maximilla are listed above as prophetesses in the Montanist movement. Therefore, they would be two women preachers in the early church movement.

There are many voices that help us to understand the subjugation of women that occurred in the first and second century. The Haustafeln (Household) Codes are an example of that subjugation that helped to shape the lives of the Greco-Roman world. In the Haustafeln Codes women were considered to be subordinate to men. Clarice J. Martin writes of the Haustafeln Codes in *Stony the Road We Trod* which was edited by Cain Hope Felder. Other voices that address the subjugation of women in the New Testament time are Ferdinand F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert who wrote of biblical pedagogy in their book, *Teaching the Bible: The Discourse and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy*, Karen J. Torjesen in her book *When Women Were Priests: Women Leadership in the Early Church & the Scandal of their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity*, and Antionette Clark Wire in her book *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric*.

⁷ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, Second Edition, Volume 2, 1182.

After reviewing the writers that have helped to share the story of the subjugation of women in the New Testament times, we turn our attention to the history of the NBC, Inc.

The Position of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

In considering the issue of women preachers in the NBC, Inc. we must evaluate the history of the black Baptist church. Several writers that helped to shape our awareness of the issue of the black church were Leroy Fitts in *A History of Black Baptists*, E. Franklin Frazier in his book *The Negro Church in America*, and C. Eric Lincoln, and Lawrence H. Mamiya in *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, Laura Maffly-Kipp in "African American Religion in the Nineteenth Century," Albert J. Raboteau in *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South*, and James Melvin Washington in *Frustrated Fellowship: The Black Baptist Quest for Social Power*.

Some of other writers that were consulted in the preparation of this paper that have contributed to the history of the black Baptist church are, Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer in *African American Religion in the Twentieth Century: Varieties of Protest and Accommodation*, Dr. J. M. Carroll in "The Trail of Blood," and Thelma Chambers-Young in "Doctrinal Statement of the Progressive National Baptist Convention." The Oklahoma State Convention of the Progressive Baptist Convention has a policy in support of women preachers.

We are grateful to two women writers for helping us to appreciate women that have contributed to the black church. We are grateful to Betty Collier-Thomas for giving

the world her book *Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979*. Through this book we saw many of the contributions that women preachers have made for the early nineteenth century. We are also thankful for the contribution that Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham made to our education in her book *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Church, 1880-1920*.

Our evaluation would not be complete if we did not consider those that have not been supportive of women preachers. One writer that has told the story of the Southern Baptist Convention is Humphreys, Fisher. *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology has Changed and What it Means to Us All*. New York: McCracken Press, 1994.

Complimentarian and Egalitarian Positions

Because the issue of women preachers is influenced by one's interpretation of scripture, it is important to hear from two positions on the issue. The position of the complimentarian, which was formerly called fundamentalism, is one that is held by many Christians. The egalitarian position is in support of women preachers, and is also held by many Christians. Many may not be all fundamentalist or all egalitarian. In fact, many may fall somewhere in between, embracing some complimentarian views and some egalitarian views. As an example, I have observed that many Christians are in support of women preachers, but they are opposed to women pastors.

Many scholars have helped us evaluate both sides of the issue of women preachers. They are James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg in *Two Views on Women in Ministry*. Brenda E. Brasher in "Fundamentalism," Loren Cunningham and David J.

Hamilton in *Why Not Women?*, George W. Dollar in *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology has Changed and What it Means to Us All*, and Doug V. Heck in his article "The Philosophy of Women's Ministry in the Local Church."

Different Theological Voices

There are different voices that have emerged in recent years that reflect the forming of a fabric that is composed of many materials and textures. They are voices that reflect diverse opinions and positions. Theology is not dictated by one voice. Instead, there are different perspectives and opinions. One voice does not have to be more valid than another. Each researcher should hear from the different voices and determine which voices are pertinent to them and their particular situation.

There are many voices that are informing us of the issue of women preaching. One such voice is Dr. Larry D. George, who, in his article, "Something You Just Cannot Shake," shares with us the need to answer the call. It is a need that each person that is called, a man or a woman, is compelled to answer. It is something that you just can't shake. Other voices, like Florence M. Gillman in *Women Who Knew Paul*. Collegvile and Grady, J. Lee in *10 Lies the Church Tells Women*. Jacquelyn Grant in her book *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus*, help to clarify the difference between feminist and womanist theology. Other voices have assisted in defining womanist theology such as Stephany Y. Mitchem, in *Womanist Theology*, Phyllis Tribble in *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, and Delores S. Williams in *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*.

Two other writers that have made a significant contribution to the subject of women preachers are Beverly Mayne Kienszle, and Pamela J. Walker in their work *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*.

There are many scholars with many voices to help inform us. After reviewing the scholars and the text, I am convinced that God can and does use whomever God chooses to use for his glory. Certainly, women can and have preached. If God ordains a woman to preach, who am I to question what God has sanctioned?

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

In this section of the paper we will detail theoretical foundations that help support the position that the gifts of women preachers in the NBC, Inc. should be celebrated. God has given the church gifts through many black women. Some of them have been called to preach and hold other leadership positions in the church. As a part of the theological foundations for this paper we will present the biblical, historical, and theological foundations that support the right and responsibility of women preachers to answer their call to preach in the NBC, Inc. We begin by investigating the biblical foundations. We begin the biblical foundation evaluation at the beginning, genesis.

Biblical Foundation

The Creation Story

In addressing the issue of women preaching we must go back to one of the starting points of the subjugation of women, the creation story. The basic foundation of the partnership of women and men is given in the opening chapters of Genesis. How a person interprets the creation story can lead one to believe in the subjugation of women or the partnership of women with men. Phyllis Tribble in her book, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* states, "For some people today the Bible supports female slavery and male-

domination in culture,¹ while for others it offers freedom from sexism.”² Perhaps it is fitting that we look at the creation story in Genesis to reflect on a basis for the hegemony that plagues many cultures.

In his book, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, John Temple Bristow says, “Paul’s Gentile converts to the faith were heirs to Greek philosophy, with Aristotelian and stoic disdain for women. His Jewish converts were heirs to the authority of the Old Testament, which offers quite a varied and colorful collection of examples of womanhood.”³ While the Old Testament had strong female figures such as Rahab, Ruth, Esther, Deborah, and the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31, the rabbis of Judaism, for the most part, devalued women in their teachings.⁴ The negative interpretation of Genesis 3, regarding women, is that Eve fell for the promises of the serpent, and as a result she was cursed with child bearing and was to serve Adam.⁵ Therefore, this negative interpretation of the creation story lends credence to the position that women are inferior to men.

To dispel the myth that women are inferior to men, we will review the first three chapters of Genesis as they pertain to two issues: (1) the term “ezer” (partner) used in

¹ E.g. Elizabeth Gould Davis, *The First Sex* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1972), pp. 140-44 and passim; Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex*, with a new feminist post-Christian introduction by the author (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), pp. 21-22, 74-84; cf. Vern L. Bullough, *The Subordinate Sex* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 40-49, 79-120 in Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 7.

² E.g. Dorothy D. Burlage, “Judeo-Christian Influences on Female Sexuality,” in *Sexual Religion and Women in the Church*, ed. Alice L. Hageman (New York, New York: Association Press, 1974), pp. 93-116; Phyllis Bird, “Images of Women in the Old Testament,” in *Religion and Sexism*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether (New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974); Katherine D. Sakenfield, “The Bible and Women: Bane or Blessing?” *Theology Today* 32 (1975): 222-33 in Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 7.

³ John Temple Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women* (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988), 14.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Genesis 2:18 and (2) the term “*adam*” (human beings) used in Genesis 1-3. I begin the interpretation by investigating the term “*ezer*.”

The term “*ezer*” as defined by John Temple Bristow means “helper,” help meet” or “partner.”⁶ Tembe L. J. Mafico, in his article, “Biblical Exegesis and Its Shortcomings in Theological Education,” applies the term partner to the term “*ezer*.”⁷ Using the term partner instead of helper or help meet provides a different perspective on the understanding of the relationship between men and women that one may glean from Genesis 2:18. The term partner portrays a unique closeness or mutuality as opposed to the subjectivity that the term helper or helpmeet implies.⁸

The importance of the term “*ezer*” is expressed in Genesis 2:20 when it is stated, “... but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.” After the woman was formed from Adam’s side or rib, the man declared in Genesis 2:23, “This at last is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.”⁹ The man and the woman were to become one flesh (Genesis 2:24). Looking at all of creation there was not found a compatible partner for man other than the woman. Mafico expounds upon the term *ezer* in Genesis 2:20 when he expresses the term “*ezer knegdo*” which means “compatible partner” or one like his own mirror

⁶ Ibid., 16.

⁷ Temba L. J. Mafico, “Biblical Exegesis and Its Shortcomings in Theological Education” in *Teachings in the Bible: The Discourses and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy* ed. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (New York, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 265.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

image.¹⁰ Mafico states, “The biblical account of the creation of man and woman is intended to underscore the point that a man without a woman is alone.”¹¹

The importance of the term *ezer* is also expressed in the fact that the term is used seventeen times in the Old Testament to refer to God.¹² The term *ezer* in no way reflects a “lesser than” status for the woman. If it did, it would also reflect a similar status for God.

The second point that we would like to make in interpreting Genesis 1-3 to dispel the myth that women are inferior to men is in the definition of the term “*adam*.” Mafico states, “The Hebrew term “*adam*” was originally used as a collective generic term meaning “human beings,” regardless of gender.¹³ The neutral term “*adam*” is used for human beings instead of the term “*is*” (man, husband) or “*issa*” (woman, wife).”¹⁴

Interpreting *adam* to be “human being” supports Genesis 1:26-27 where humankind is created in God’s image, and God created them, male and female created he them. The creation story in Genesis 1:26-27 is prior to the one in Genesis 2:18-25, where the woman is created from Adams side or rib. God is neither male nor female.¹⁵ God is a Spirit (John 4:24). Yet God created male and female in his image. Tribble interprets the creation of male and female in the image of God as a metaphor.¹⁶ Understanding the term “*adam*” to represent “human being” is synonymous with Tribble’s understanding that

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 266.

¹² Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, 16.

¹³ Ibid., 263.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 21.

¹⁶ Ibid., 22.

male and female, together, express the fullness of humankind.¹⁷ This fullness represents the image of God, while not being God. Tribble states, "The vehicle connotes humankind in its fullness, a fullness that affirms both its likeness and unlikeness to God."¹⁸ Tribble expounds upon the metaphor of male and female being created in God's image:

As a clue for interpreting scripture, this metaphor can function in two ways.¹⁹ First, it can direct attention to partial metaphors of "male" and "female" by placing them within an encompassing network.²⁰ For instance, metaphors such as God the father (Ps. 103:13), the husband (Hos. 2:16), the king (Ps. 98:6), and the warrior (Exod. 15:3) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God male. By the same token, metaphors such as God the pregnant woman (Isa. 42:14), the mother (Isa. 66:13), the midwife (Ps. 22:9), and the mistress (Ps. 123:2) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God female. All these partial metaphors involve societal roles and relationships which the basic metaphor organizes without necessarily promoting.²¹ In fact, the basic metaphor contrasts with the imbalance of these partial metaphors. It presents an equality in the image of God male and female, although the Bible overwhelmingly favors male metaphors for deity.²²

The term "*adam*" should not be interpreted as a man that is superior to a woman. Instead, it should be interpreted as representing humankind. Bristow states, "Some have interpreted the fact that Adam came before Eve to mean that man should be superior to

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ I propose no historical, literary, or intentional links between Gen. 1:27 and the rest of scripture; rather I have chosen this verse as my interpretive clue in Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 22.

²⁰ Cf. The discussion of root metaphors in Ricoer, *Interpretation Theory*, p. 64 in Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 22.

²¹ Partial metaphors not encompassed by the image of God male and female would include, e.g., inanimate comparisons, such as God the rock, the fortress, the shield, and the horn (cf. Ps. 18:2) in Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1978), 22.

²² Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, 22.

woman.”²³ If chronological order in creation depicts superiority, then all of the animals of the earth should be superior to humankind, for they were created first.²⁴ The order of birth or creation has never depicted superiority. David was the youngest son of Jesse, yet he became king (1 Samuel 16:1-13).

There is a fallacy that needs to be dispelled concerning the depiction of the woman as the sole culprit who fell to the smooth talking serpent. Eve did not act alone in her decision to eat of the fruit. Adam was with Eve when the serpent talked to her in Genesis 3:6 in both the NIV and the NRSV. So the fall was not the sole fault of the woman, but, as in creation, the man was a partner to the woman in the fall.

Assuming there was a “fall”, we don’t have to stay in a fallen state. That is why we become new creatures in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). A quote from Clarice J. Martin’s article entitled, “The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: “Free Slaves” and “Subordinate Women,”” helps to explain that we must not be captives to an interpretation of scripture that subjugates women based on an understanding of the fall that blames women.²⁵

David and Elouise Fraser, in their essay “A Biblical View of Women: Demythologizing Sexegesis,” argues that the functional subordination of women to men is the result of the fall and does not grow out of God’s intention in creation. Never meant to be a permanent ethic for male-female social relations, but a part of sin’s curse, it is ultimately abolished in the work of Christ. The church should never be content until the full personal and social

²³ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, 17.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Clarice J. Martin, “The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: “Free Slaves” and “Subordinate Women” in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1991), 229.

implications of the eschatological reality of Galatians 3:28-29 are established and practiced in this age.²⁶

The woman was never meant to be lesser than or subservient to the man. They were to be partners. Galatians 3:28-29 reflects that egalitarian status that men and women should be striving for when it states, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."²⁷ Next, we evaluate the biblical foundational support in the Old Testament.

Women Preachers in the Old Testament

Although the Old Testament records the leadership of many women like Esther, Ruth and the Virtuous woman of Proverbs 31, I focus on three women in this section of the paper; Miriam, Deborah, and Hulda. I focus on them because they were called prophetesses. To prophesy is to speak forth for God. The prophets, in the Old Testament, were the preachers of their time. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words defines prophesy as the speaking forth of the mind and council of God.²⁸ Donald L. Hamilton in his book, *Homiletic Handbook* states, "The biblical concept of preaching is centered in one word from the Old Testament and four words

²⁶ Clarice J. Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation, 229, quoting David and Elouise Frasure, "A Biblical View of Women: Demythologizing Sexegesis," in *Theology, News, Notes* (Fuller Theological Seminary, June 1975), 14-18.

²⁷ Gal. 3:28-29

²⁸ F. F. Bruce, ed., *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Tarrytown, New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1981), 221.

from the New Testament. The Old Testament word is *naba*, which translated into English means "prophecy" is used over 110 times.²⁹

God called and used women preachers in the Old Testament. One woman of significant leadership capabilities was Miriam, the sister of Moses. We first hear of Miriam's leadership when she helped to rescue her brother from Pharaoh and preserve her people (Ex. 2:1-10).³⁰ The prophet Micah calls Miriam a special gift from God to lead God's people (Micah 6:4).³¹ In Exodus 15:20-21, Miriam is referred to as the prophetess when she leads a praise service after Pharaoh's army drowned pursuing the children of Israel. Therefore, she is the first person in the Old Testament to lead a congregational worship service.³² J. Lee Grady, in his book *10 Lies the Church Tells Women*, states, "Oddly enough, many churches today will not allow a woman to hold the position of worship leader even though Miriam was a forerunner for this vital ministry."³³ Her name is mentioned along with her mother's, Jochebed, among the males of the priestly tribe (Num. 26:59; 1 Chr. 6:3), indicating the importance of their spiritual leadership (Heb. 11:23).³⁴

²⁹ Donald L. Hamilton, *Homiletic Handbook* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1992), 10.

³⁰ J. Lee Grady, *10 Lies the Church Tells Women: How the Bible Has Been Misused To Keep Women in Spiritual Bondage* (Lake Mary, Florida: Charisma House, 1996), 36.

³¹ Richard and Catherine Kroeger, "Women Elders ... Called by God?," (accessed 8 April 2003); available from <http://www.firstpresby.org/womenelders.htm>; Internet.

³² Grady, *10 Lies the Church Tells Women*, 36-37.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Kroeger, "Women Elders Called by God?," 4.

Miriam and Aaron questioned Moses' leadership because he had married an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1-15).³⁵ Miriam was struck with leprosy for seven days as a result of her speaking against Moses, who was God's choice for leadership.³⁶ As in the case of Miriam and Aaron questioning Moses' leadership, we should not question whom God has sanctioned, even if that chosen person is a woman.

Judges 4 and 5 record the story of Deborah. Deborah was a judge in Israel and served as prophetess (Judges 4:4).³⁷ Lauren Cunningham and David J. Hamilton, in their book *Why Not Women?*, state, "Deborah was the head of state, just as Samuel and other prophets were in the days before Israel had a king."³⁸ Deborah wrote a song of praise in Judges 5 that makes her one of the writers of the Bible, going against the claim of many that women did not write any part of the Bible.³⁹ Deborah's leadership in battle has been recorded in Judges 4. When Barak, the male general, was afraid to lead an army against Jabin, the king of Canaan, he asked for Deborah's help (Judges 4:8).⁴⁰ Israel won that battle, aided by another woman by the name of Jael, who drove a nail into the temples of Sisera, the Captain of Jabin's army (Judges 4:21).

J. Lee Grady states, "Deborah presents a problem for conservative church leaders today who want to promote the view that women cannot function in senior positions of

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Lauren Cunningham and David J. Hamilton, *Why Not Women?: A Biblical Study of Women in Missions, Ministry, and Leadership* (Seattle, Washington: YWAM Publishing, 1989), 52.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Kroeger, "Women Elders Called by God?," 4.

spiritual authority.”⁴¹ One area that would baffle those that believe women cannot hold senior leadership positions is the fact that Deborah was married, but her husband, Lapidoth,⁴² did not share her position of spiritual authority.⁴³

Another woman of prominence in the Old Testament was Hulda, the prophetess. The story of King Josiah as recorded in 2 Kings 22:8-20 and 2 Chr. 34:14-28 mentions the contributions of the prophetess Hulda. Israel had experienced fifty years of paganism and spiritual adultery.⁴⁴ King Josiah, finding a scroll in the temple, needed to know if the scroll was an authentic word from God. His servants went to Hulda for God’s answer.

Hulda, like Deborah, was a prophetess. Hulda, speaking for the Lord said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel" as she confirmed that the book was the word of God, which the people were to obey (II Kings 22:15-20). As a result of the people obeying the scroll, Israel experienced a period of revival. There were male prophets available, at the time, but God chose to use a woman. The fact that Hilkiah, the high priest, and his associates sought Hulda to hear from God and confirm the authenticity of the scroll shows that she had earned a reputation for hearing from God.⁴⁵

Little is known about another prophetess that is mentioned in the Old Testament. She was the wife of Isaiah. Isaiah called his wife a prophetess in Isaiah 8:3. Having

⁴¹ Grady, *10 Lies the Church Tells Women: How the Bible has been misused to keep women in spiritual bondage*, 37.

⁴² Judges 4:4

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women: An Apostle’s Liberating Views on Equality in Marriage, Leadership, and Love*, 38.

evaluated women preachers presented in the Old Testament, we now turn to women preachers in Jesus' ministry.

Women Preachers in Jesus' Ministry

In the time of Jesus' ministry, women were usually regarded as subordinate and inferior in virtually every area of life. This opinion of subordination of women came from two sources: (1) the Hellenization of Jewish thought, and (2) the interpretation of the Old Testament by some rabbis. The Greek influence (Hellenization) on Jewish culture helped to promote the belief of the inferiority of women.

After the conquest of Alexander the Great, many Jews welcomed the customs and philosophies of the Greeks, which is known as "Hellenization."⁴⁶ John Temple Bristow quotes the author of I Maccabees in describing the Hellenization process:

At that time, lawless men arose in Israel and seduced many with their plea, "Come, let us make a covenant with the gentiles around us, because ever since we have kept ourselves separate from them we have suffered many evils." The plea got so favorable a reception that some of the people took it upon themselves to apply to the king, who granted them liberty to follow the practices of the gentiles. Thereupon they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem according to the custom of the gentiles and underwent operations to disguise their circumcision, rebelling against the sacred covenant. They joined themselves to the gentiles and became willing slaves to evildoing. (1 Macc. 1:11-15 RSV)⁴⁷

The societal structure, in the first century, that was prevalent was one that came from the Greek philosophers. Bristow states, "But it was Socrates (c. 470-399 B.C.) who immortalized the Athenian disdain toward women. Often he referred to women as 'the

⁴⁶ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 23.

⁴⁷ Anchor Bible Translation, quoted in Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 24.

weaker sex.' He argued that being born a woman is a divine punishment, since a woman is halfway between a man and an animal."⁴⁸

Aristotle learned from Socrates and Plato about the inferiority of women. Bristow states, "He formalized the practice of sexual discrimination and laid a philosophical foundation for the inferiority of women. Centuries later, church leaders, who themselves were a product of Greek culture and education interpreted Paul's writings from the perspective of Aristotelian philosophy."⁴⁹ The formalized practice of sexual discrimination became known as household (Haustafeln) codes.⁵⁰ It is my opinion that many in NBC adopted the same Haustafeln codes that originated with Socrates.

The second source of the opinion of subordination of women in the first century came from the interpretation of the Old Testament by some rabbis. John Temple Bristow states, "Despite the examples of capable and strong willed women in the Old Testament, the rabbis of Judaism (for the most part) devalued women in their teachings."⁵¹ Many of the rabbis overlooked the positive portrayal of women such as Miriam, Deborah, Hulda, Ruth, Esther, Tamar, Rahab, and the ideal wife described in Proverbs 31 to embrace a more negative opinion of women. Bristow writes, "Girls are but an illusory treasure," sighs one rabbi; "Besides, they have to be watched continually."⁵² Another remarks, "A

⁴⁸ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 4.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁵⁰ Clarice J. Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: Free Slaves and Subordinate Women" in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*, Cane Hope Felder, ed. (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1991), 206.

⁵¹ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 15.

⁵² Ibid.

woman has more pleasure in one *kab* [measure] with lechery than in nine *kabs* with modesty.”⁵³ The implication was that women were not to be trusted.

Jesus broke down the walls of exclusion for women. We first hear of a prophetess in the life of Jesus when Mary took him to the temple to be blessed (Luke 2:36-38). In the temple, Anna, the prophetess, gave thanks to God for Jesus, and told others of Jesus that looked for redemption.⁵⁴ The Gospels represent Jesus as being accompanied by women.⁵⁵ Mark states, “There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome, who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and served him to Jerusalem” (Mark 15:40-41). Luke records women followers as being supportive of Jesus and the twelve (Luke 8:2-3).

Jesus’ defense of women was noted in his standing up for them when the social norm was to condemn them. Such was the case when it came to divorce. In first century Palestine, the prerogative of divorce belonged almost exclusively with men, and virtually any reason could be used to justify divorce. Jesus taught that the woman has equal rights with the man concerning divorce.⁵⁶ He teaches, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery” (Mark 10:11-12).

⁵³ Sotah 3:4, All quotations from the Mishnah are translated by Herbert Danby (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), quoted in John Temple Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women: An Apostle’s Liberating Views on Equality in Marriage, Leadership, and Love* (San Francisco, California: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988), 38.

⁵⁴ Kroeger, “Women Elders Called by God?,” 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁶ Cunningham and David J. Hamilton, *Why Not Women?: A Biblical Study of Women in Missions, Ministry, and Leadership*, 115.

Jesus reached out to women who were rejected. In spite of the laws regarding uncleanness, Jesus allowed a woman with a twelve-year menstrual problem to touch him and commended her faith (Mark 5:25-34).⁵⁷ Kroeger states:

When He told so many other people not to let anyone know about their healing, why did He insist that she declare hers before a large crowd? Her affliction had been exclusively and intensely feminine. Why should she reveal it? It was during this period that regulations concerning women were being codified into the Mishnah. Jacob Neusner has noted that these Jewish laws dealing with the "impurities" and life circumstances of women were based on a view of woman as an abnormality. A condition of the type which plagued this woman would require her isolation from human society, but Jesus drew her among the crowd and through her taught that He accepts and transforms every human condition.⁵⁸

Although the disciples did not want a woman, who wept, to be present, Jesus permitted a sinful woman to anoint and kiss his feet (Luke 7:36-50).⁵⁹ Jesus offered salvation directly to the Samaritan woman and the woman caught in the act of adultery, who were known adulteresses (John 4:4-42 and John 8:1-11).

In first century Palestine, responsible teachers were not to teach women. Nevertheless, Jesus taught women. He taught Mary of Bethany and showed a preference for her actions as opposed to those of Martha that was carrying out the traditional activities of preparing the meal (Luke 10:38-42).⁶⁰ Mary, in sitting at the feet of Jesus to learn, had chosen the good part that was needful (Luke 10:42). Jesus stated that it would

⁵⁷ Richard and Catherine Kroeger, "Women Elders Called by God?," 6.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁹ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, 54.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

not be taken from her. She had broken from traditional values and customs by learning from a man.⁶¹

According to Luke 8:1-3, many women were in Jesus' band of traveling disciples. These same women were present at the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Luke 23:49, 55-56; 24:1).⁶² Jesus waited until the men had left the tomb before he appeared to Mary and the other women (John 20:1-18; Matt. 28:9-10). This was His deliberate choice.⁶³ It was the women who were first commissioned to proclaim the Resurrection to the world (Matt. 28:7-10; Mark 16:7; John 20:17). The early Church considered it essential that an apostle be a first-hand witness to the Resurrection (Acts 1:22). From the Bible record, women obviously had this qualification.⁶⁴

Jesus introduced egalitarianism to a world that was bent on the subjugation of women. In the early church, many followed the example of Jesus and respected women. John Temple Bristow states:

Apparently, Jesus' example regarding women became the norm within the apostolic church. The apostles soon began to speak of the "women of our company" (Luke 24:22). When the apostles engaged in prayer, they did so "together with the women" (Acts 1:14). After the Day of Pentecost, "multitudes, both of men and women" were welcomed into the fellowship of believers (Acts 5:14), and both men and women were baptized (Acts 8:12).⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Richard and Catherine Kroeger, "Women Elders Called by God?," 6-8.

⁶³ Ibid., 7.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁶⁵ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women*, 54.

There are those that contend that Paul's writings are supportive of the subjugation of women. However, if we evaluate the scriptures and if we do not accept the English translation literally and universally, we find that Paul was an egalitarian.

Women Preachers in Paul's Ministry

Paul, following the example of Christ, treated women with greater respect than did the prevailing society in the first century. Scripture supporting the fact that we are to follow the example of Christ can be found in Philippians and Romans. Philippians 2:5 states, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."⁶⁶ Romans 8:29 states, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."⁶⁷ While the aforementioned scriptures do not, specifically, refer to the treatment of women, Christ's defense of, support for, and teaching of women, provides an example for others to follow. If we are to follow the example of Christ, we should treat women the way Christ treated them.

In this section of the paper, I will briefly mention the work of some of the women that were workers with Paul: (1) Lois, Eunice, and Damaris who are remembered for their faith, (2) Lydia, Chloe, and Nympha who were heads of house churches, (3) Eudoia, Syntyche, and Prisca who were co-workers with Paul, (4) Phoebe who was a deacon, (5) Junia who was an apostle and, (6) the daughters of Philip who were prophetesses.

As the contributions of the aforementioned women are reviewed, it must be pointed out that many contributions made by women may never be known. Some people

⁶⁶ Phil. 2:5

⁶⁷ Rom. 8:29

in history only get mentioned in relation to someone else. Thus leaving out a significant portion of their life or contribution. Florence M. Gillman, in her book, *Women Who Knew Paul*, refers to such an occurrence as being “accidentally” recorded in history.⁶⁸ Some women are recorded in early Christian history only by accident. The focus of the culture in the first century world of Paul was focused on the male in the predominantly Greco-Roman culture. It is refreshing that we get a glimpse into some of the contributions of women in the early church, but I cannot help but think that the contributions were far greater than what has been recorded. I begin by looking at the contributions of Lois, Eunice, and Damaris.

Lois and Eunice were the grandmother and mother of Timothy, respectively. They were from Lystra in Lycaonia. Acts 16:1-3 refers to a period early in Paul’s second missionary journey when he arrives in Lystra and invites Timothy to accompany him.⁶⁹ Timothy was described as the son of a Jewish believer and a Greek father (Acts 16:1). Timothy is referred to as Paul’s beloved and faithful child in the Lord (1 Cor. 4:17). Florence M. Gillman states, “His significance in Paul’s missionary life is reflected in the later Deutero-Pauline tradition which addresses two of the Pastoral letters, 1 and 2 Timothy, to him.”⁷⁰

In 2 Timothy 1:5, the writer of 2 Timothy refers to Timothy’s sincere faith. It was a faith that dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice.⁷¹ In 2 Timothy

⁶⁸ Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 21.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 22.

⁷¹ Ibid.

3:15, the author states, “from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”⁷²

Lois and Eunice had faith and instructed Timothy in preparation for service.

While many know of Lois and Eunice, few have heard of Damaris. She was one of Paul’s converts in Athens. There is a hill in Athens close to the acropolis called the Areopagus or Hill of Ares.⁷³ Gilman states, “This hill served as a meeting place for an advisory council to the Athenian kings.”⁷⁴ In the first century CE the council convened in the Royal Portico in the marketplace.⁷⁵ Paul spoke before the council. Acts 17:34 states, “But some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.”⁷⁶ Little is known about Damaris, but the fact that her name was mentioned indicates that her presence had some significance.

The next focus of the paper is on women that were household heads of churches. Lydia, Chloe, and Nympha were the heads of churches that assembled in their homes. Given the press of the culture of the time to subjugate women, it is assumed that women who were the household heads came into such an independent position as a result of being widowed, divorced, or never married.⁷⁷ Women with three or four children were

⁷² 2 Tim. 3:15

⁷³ Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul*, 25.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Acts 17:34

⁷⁷ Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul*, 29.

allowed a number of privileges, including the right to apply for an official to make legal transactions without first obtaining the consent of their guardian or husband.⁷⁸

Lydia was a Philippian. She was Paul's first European convert.⁷⁹ Information about Lydia is recorded in Acts 16:11-40, which tells of the founding of the church at Philippi.⁸⁰ Two verses in Acts 16 mention Lydia; Acts 16:14 tells us that she was from Thyatira and that she a business women that sold purple material,⁸¹ and Acts 16:40 tells of Paul and Silas going into the house of Lydia when they came out of the prison.⁸²

Another woman head of a household church was Chloe. She was mentioned in 1 Cor. 1:11. Paul had received word from "those of Chloe" about quarreling among the Corinthians.⁸³ Paul received the message while he was in Ephesus. It is not evident, however, where the people were from. They may have been from Ephesus or Corinth.⁸⁴

It appears that Chloe was a woman of considerable means.⁸⁵ Gilman states, "It is not clear, however, that she was a Christian, although her people evidently were. Sending to Paul for assistance would indicate that the people were Christian."⁸⁶

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 30.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Acts 16:14

⁸² Acts 16:40

⁸³ Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul*, 38.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Florence M. Gillman suggests, "If indeed Chloe was Christian, which still remains an open question, she and Lydia together would suggest a type of woman who belonged to the Pauline Churches: female heads of households and businesses, women thus accustomed to leadership and decision-making roles."⁸⁷ Nymphia was also the head of a house church.

Colossians 4:15 refers to the church in Nympha's house. There is disagreement among scholars as to whether Paul viewed house churches as a part of the local churches or whether house churches and local churches were the same.⁸⁸ Florence M. Gillman believes that the church at Nympha's house was the local church. She states, "This reasonable deduction that Nympha's group was the local church at Hierapolis suggests that we should view her not as the head of one group among many such Christian cells in one city, but as the leader of the entire Church in Hierapolis."⁸⁹

There has been a battle to keep the memory of Nympha alive. Her gender has been in question since her name in Greek is written in the accusative case, *Nymphan*.⁹⁰ Florence M. Gillman writes, "This formed could refer to a female named Nympha or a male named Nymphas. The question has been complicated by manuscript variations in the possessive pronoun modifying "house" in Colossians 4:15. Some ancient texts read *autes*, "her," others *autou*, "his." And yet others, *auton*, "their." The feminine meaning is the most difficult to explain and thus more likely to be the original. The masculine form

⁸⁷ Ibid., 39.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 40.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

can be explained as a correction of the feminine name by copyists who considered it either impossible or undesirable that a woman should have a leadership role.”⁹¹

Women of faith and women heads of house churches have been mentioned heretofore. Now we turn our attention to co-workers with Paul. Paul refers to three women as his co-workers with whom he labored in the gospel, Euodia, Syntyche and Prisca. Florence M. Gillman states, “Paul accords the title of *synergoi* (co-worker) to these three women and various men.”⁹² It is one of the most frequently found of the designations Paul uses to speak of his many associates.”⁹³

In Philippians 4:2-3, Paul mentioned two women that “labored side by side” with him in the gospel along with Clement and other co-workers. Euodia and Syntyche are mentioned in Philippians because of a disagreement that they had. While Euodia and Syntyche are clearly women’s names, there have been scholars that have argued about whether they were women or not. Theodore of Mopsuestia contended that Syntyche was a male. He made such a claim because he heard it said that Syntyche should have been

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² A complete list of all explicitly called *synergoi* includes Timothy (1 Thess. 3:2; Rom. 16:21); Apollos (1 Cor. 3:9); Philemon (Phlm. 1); Aristarchus, Mark, Demas, Luke, and probably Jesus Justus (Phlm. 23-24; cf. Col. 4:10-14); Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25); Eodias, Syntyche, Clement and others (Phil. 4:2-3); Titus (2 Cor. 8:23); Prisca and Aquila (Rom. 16:3); Urbanas (Rom. 16:9); indirectly Stephanas, Fortunatus, Acvhaicus, and others (1 Cor. 16:15-18). Of course, the subject of Paul’s co-workers involves more than those listed here since individuals such as Lydia or Nympha who are not given titles clearly also functioned as Paul’s associates, quoted in Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul* (Collegville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 45.

⁹³ Other often used terms are *adelphos*, “brother,” *diakonos*, “deacon,” *apostolos*, “apostle.” On all of the terms used for the Pauline co-workers, see E. Earl Ellis, “Paul and His Co-Workers,” *New Testament Studies* 17 (1970-71) 437-452, quoted in Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul* (Collegville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 45.

spelled Syntyches, and that he was the jailer at Philippi and Euodia's husband.⁹⁴ No substantiation exists for such a claim.

Theories claiming that Euodia and Syntyche were not individuals at all but symbols of Jewish and Gentile Christians respectively, and that Euodia or Styche were the Lydia of Acts 16 have also been conjectured.⁹⁵ The claim that Eudoia or Sytyche was Lydia was based on the assumption that the name Lydia was an adjective designating the place of origin, i.e., "the Lydian."⁹⁶ The quarrel between Eudoia and Syntyche was of importance to the Philippian church. Paul urged the two to be reconciled in the Lord. Paul urges them to be of one mind in Christ.

Another co-worker that Paul referred to was Prisca. Prisca was also called Priscilla. Paul designated Priscilla and Aquila "fellow workers in Christ Jesus (Rom. 16:3)," a term used regularly for other leaders in the gospel ministry: Urbanus (Rom. 16:9), Timothy (Rom. 16: 21), Titus (2 Cor. 8:23), Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25), Clement (Phil. 4:3), Philemon (Phlm. 1), Demas and Luke (Phlm. 24), Apollos and himself, (1 Cor. 3:9), and several others (Colossians 4:11).

The New Testament records the fact that Prisca traveled extensively (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2Tim. 4:19). She and her husband Aquila traveled from Rome to Corinth (Acts 18:2), from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18:11, 19), and back to Rome in Rom. 16:4-5. Priscilla and Aquila, were tentmakers, like Paul. The fact that they moved extensively indicates that they were probably free.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ Florence M. Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul*, 45.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 50.

It is significant that Priscilla is usually mentioned first, since the cultural pattern would be to name the husband first. In four of six references to them, Priscilla was mentioned before Aquila (Acts 18:18, 26; Rom. 16:3; 2 Tim. 4:19).⁹⁸ This may indicate that Priscilla was the more important or visible leader and may suggest that she had a higher social status and/or more wealth than Aquila.⁹⁹

Paul indicated that he and all the Gentile churches were indebted to both Priscilla and Aquila. Paul may have been particularly indebted to Priscilla and Aquila because the couple risked their necks for him (Rom. 16:40).

Another reason for indebtedness may have been the fact that they instructed Apollos. After hearing him speak at Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila took him and expounded the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:26). Florence M. Gillman states, "And when he (Apollos) was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: (Acts 18:27)"¹⁰⁰ The brethren recommending Apollos would have included Prisca and Aquila and their house church.

It is clear from Acts 18:26-27 that Priscilla taught Apollos, which would be contradictory to 1 Tim 2:12, which states, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Such a contradiction lends credence to the theory that the Pastorals may not have been written by Paul. How could Paul commend Priscilla for her work in the Lord, and then tell her to be silent?

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Grady, *10 Lies the Church Tells*, 39.

¹⁰⁰ Acts 18:27

Paul commended Phoebe to the church at Rome and asked them to receive her in the Lord (Rom. 16:1-2). She was a member of the church at Cenchrea, a seaport seven miles east of Corinth. She was probably a Gentile. Florence M. Gillman states, "Her name, an epithet for the goddess Artemis, suggests she must have been a Gentile since it is unlikely to have been given to a Jewess. There is some disagreement among scholars as to whether Romans 16 was written to the church at Ephesus or Rome. Florence M. Gillman assumes that Romans 16 is a part of the epistle to the Romans and that Phoebe carried the epistle with her to Rome."¹⁰¹

The controversy concerning Phoebe occurs in Romans 16:1-2, where Paul states, "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also (KJV)." Florence M. Gillman states, "In asking the Romans to be hospitable to Phoebe he describes her using three titles: *adelphē*, "sister," *diakonos*, "deacon," and *prostatis*, "patroness." For Paul to call Phoebe "our sister" indicates that she was a "Christian." The specification that she was a *diakonos* of the church at Cenchrea appears to give her a qualification beyond being a sister."¹⁰²

Phoebe should be called a deacon, not a deaconess. Florence M. Gillman states the following.

In fairness to Paul's Greek, in which *diakonos* may be either masculine or feminine, Phoebe should be called a deacon, not a deaconess as in the RSV translation of Romans 16:1. To describe her as a deaconess is, first, to imply that Paul used a term, *diakonissa*, which does not appear in Greek during the period of

¹⁰¹ Gillman, *Women Who Knew Paul*, 61.

¹⁰² Ibid.

Pauline Christianity and, second, to suggest, in view of the later and modern deaconess movements, that Phoebe's role was subordinate to that of male deacons and involved primarily ministry to other women. Paul, however, indicates no subordination or restrictions due to gender in Phoebe's role. In this view she is simply and unequivocally, "deacon of the church at Cenchrea."¹⁰³

Paul uses the term deacon in Philippians 1:1 in the phrase "bishops and deacons" to designate officeholders within the Christian community. No specific names are used. Paul does, however, use *diakonos* to describe specific co-workers in other scripture; Apollos in 1 Cor. 3:5; Timothy in 1 Thess. 3:2, 1 Tim. 4:6; Tychicus in Col. 4:7; Eph. 6:21; and Epaphras in Col. 1:7. Paul describes his own ministry as *diakonos* in 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:23; Col. 1:23, 25; and Eph. 3:7. He refers to Christ's ministry as *diakonos* in Rom. 15:8; and Gal. 2:17. Paul, even, refers to the work of civil authorities as *diakonos* in Rom. 15:8. In all of the situations mentioned above, *diakonos* is translated in the RSV as "servant" or "minister," all of the references assembly being to males.¹⁰⁴ Phoebe should also be called a servant or minister. In fact in NIV, KJV, NKJV and many other translations, Phoebe is referred to as a servant or minister. If all of the men listed above are considered ministers, why not consider Phoebe a minister also.

Paul identified Andronicus and Junia as "outstanding among the apostles" (Rom. 16:7 KJV). However, the RSV and NIV refer to Junias instead of Junia. This is significant, because Junia is a female name, while Junias is a male name in English translation.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 62.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Greet Andronicus and Junias [*Iounian*], my kinsman and my fellow-prisoners; they are men of note among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me (Rom. 16:7 RSV).

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me (Rom. 16:7 KJV).

There has been disagreement about the gender of the person named *Iounian*.

Gillman states, "Confusion arises because the Greek *Iounian* is the accusative form which could indicate either the feminine *Junia* or the masculine name *Junias*. The masculine could be either an uncontracted name or a contraction of *Junianus*. Arguments have been advanced to support reading either gender, although the stronger case is decidedly in favor of the feminine."¹⁰⁵

One approach to clarifying the dilemma as to whether *Iounian* was female or male was inconclusive. If the name would have had an acute accent, it could have been *Junia*.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, if *Iounian* would have had a circumflex accent, it would have been *Junias*.¹⁰⁷ Since Greek accents were not added until the middle ages, a determination cannot be made based on accents.¹⁰⁸

The testimony of the patristic writers is another means of getting at the meaning of the name *Iounian*. Gillman states,

What is of special interest, however, is the testimony of patristic writers. Because they read an unaccented text, which they interpreted on the basis of context and grammar, and because many

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 66.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 67.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

such writers spoke Greek themselves, their understanding carries a heavy weight. In a survey of the church fathers up to the twelfth century who commented on Romans 16:7, the overwhelming consensus was to give a feminine reading. One of the striking comments is that by Chrysotom. Of Junia he wrote: "Oh! How great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be counted worthy of the appellation of the apostles!"¹⁰⁹

The arguments that a masculine reading of her name is consistent with the other masculine names listed in Romans 16:4-5 is further support for the obvious bias of the RSV and other translations that render the name *Iounian* as masculine. There is no reason to designate a name as masculine because other names in the proximity are masculine. Applying that type of logic would eliminate female names from most biblical texts. Perhaps, that is, what transpired in the interpretation of texts by many theologians.

The four prophetess daughters of Philip are mentioned in Acts 21:8-9. They are identified in the following passage with another prophet by the name of Agabus. We know nothing about them other than the fact that they are mentioned in this passage of scripture. However, the fact that they were mentioned in the Bible indicates that they had some degree of influence.¹¹⁰

On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles (Acts 21:8-11).'"¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Grady, *10 Lies the Church Tells Women: How the Bible has been misused to keep women in spiritual bondage*, 40.

¹¹¹ Acts 21:8-11

J. Lee Grady states, “Obviously they were engaged in public speaking, and their words carried the same level of authority as “*Agabus*.” Philip’s daughters were, in essence, women preachers who experienced a high level of respect for their spiritual insights and prophetic gifts.”¹¹² The ministry of prophesying is recognized by Paul as an important gift of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and 14:1-5.

Paul did recognize, respect, work with, and commend women of faith, women house church leaders, women co-workers, a woman deacon, a woman apostle, and women prophets. In Volume 23 of the *Epworth Review* published in January of 1996, Anthony Thacker asks the question, “Was Paul a Sexist?”¹¹³ Thacker provides seven possible answers to the question. I align with the seventh answer—Paul is a pragmatic egalitarian. Thacker states, “Howard Marshall suggests that in the ancient world the sense of emancipation that women felt on being treated as spiritually equal and thus free to play a strong, positive role in the life of the church, led to some difficulties in occasional feminine over-assertions. This, and even more the masculine humiliation or shock at the new attitude of women, lies behind Paul’s words.”¹¹⁴

There are women identified in the Bible that played significant roles in the Old and New Testaments. In the creation story, Eve was a partner with Adam. She was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The Hebrew word that referred identified Eve as a partner to Adam is the same word used of God. If Eve was less than Adam, is God less than man?

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Anthony Thacker, “Was Paul a Sexist?” in *Epworth Review*, Vol. 23, Number 1 (Great Britain: Methodist Publishing House, 1996), 85-94.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 90.

Women like Miriam, Deborah, and Hulda were respected as leaders in the Old Testament. Miriam conducted the first praise service after the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt. Deborah led Israel as a Judge and a military leader. Men prophets were bypassed for the prophetic word of Hulda concerning what should be done with the scroll that was found by Josiah.

Jesus had women that traveled with him and supported his ministry. He reached out to women in a way that had not been exercised before. He took time to talk to the woman at the well. He felt virtue come out of him, when he was touched by the woman with an issue of blood. He saw to the woman that was caught in the act of adultery, and leveled the playing field when he asked the men who would cast the first stone.

Paul followed the egalitarian nature of Jesus by working with many women. They were his co-workers, just as many men were. Women led house churches, ministered, and served the church in many capacities including as deacons and as apostles. It would be inconsistent for Paul to commend women and then berate them by telling them to be silent in the church. It is also inconsistent for him to tell women not to teach a man and commend Priscilla who taught Apollos and Lois and Eunice who taught Timothy.

A Textual Analysis of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35

The two scriptures that are quoted the most often by those that believe that women should not preach are 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

- 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.
- 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

1 Timothy 2:11-12

- 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
- 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

Both texts will be evaluated, in this section of the paper. The first text to be evaluated is 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. In this section of the paper, I address some textual concerns with 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. I will: (1) evaluate a proposal by David Odell-Scott that purports that Paul or the writer of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 may have been disagreeing with 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, (2) evaluate the possibility of the 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 may have been added or moved subsequent to the original writing, and (3) evaluate a proposal by William O. Walker that there is a common “Paulinist” source for all scripture that appears to subjugate women. Consistent with the possibility that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 may have been written by an author, other than Paul, is the possibility that it may have been written to the second century church. While the text is consistent with the rest of 1 Corinthians 14 in addressing the issue of order, it is also consistent with 1 Timothy 2:11-12 in addressing the hierarchy in the church.

I begin by evaluating the possibility that Paul or the writer of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 may have been disagreeing with the text. Robert J. Karris, O.F.M. in his article, “Pauline Literature” from *The Biblical Heritage*, quotes an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:33-36 by David Odell-Scott, which can help to dispel the inconsistencies in some of

the writings attributed to Paul concerning women in the church.¹¹⁵ David Odell Scott interprets the text as:

For God is not a God of chaos, but of peace as is maintained in all the churches of the saints. Let your women be silent, for it is not fitting for them to speak. But let them be subject in the spirit as we men interpret it for them, as even the regulations of the churches maintain. If they want to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home, for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the public assembly of the church. I don't agree with you men at all. Has the word of God originated with you? Are you men the only ones to whom it has come?¹¹⁶

If this translation were to have credence, it would provide a more consistent connection with Galatians 3:28. David Odell Scott's translation indicates that Paul did not agree with the 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.¹¹⁷ Next, I will evaluate the theory that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 was added by a later writer, which lends credence to the theory that it was written by someone in the name of Paul.

Antionette Clark Wire reports, in her book *The Corinthian Women Prophets* that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is located at the end of the chapter in several manuscripts.¹¹⁸ Wire states, "The manuscripts that place verses 34 and 35 at the end of the chapter are either Greek-Latin bilinguals or Latin texts, except for one miniscule from the twelfth century."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Robert J. Karris, O.F.M., "Pauline Literature" in *The Biblical Heritage: the Modern Catholic Scholarship*, ed. John J. Collins and John Dominic Crossan (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1986), 167.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ David Odell Scott, "In defense of an Egalitarian Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-36: A Reply to Murphy-O'Connor's Critique." *BTB* 17/3 (1987): 100-103.

¹¹⁸ Antioinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1990), 149.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

Two reasons are given as to why the verses may have been added at the end of the chapter: (1) a marginal gloss explaining Paul's restrictions on the spiritual in terms of women's silence was later inserted by a copyist, or (2) an integral part of the text by an omission, corrected immediately by reinserting it at the end of the section.¹²⁰ The first reason is unlikely because all surviving manuscripts have the verses in the same place.¹²¹ The second option is the preferred one by Wire. Earlier in 1 Corinthians 11:5, Paul had given women instructions as to how they were to dress when praying or prophesying in the assembly. It would be a contradiction for Paul to then instruct women to be silent in the church and expect such an instruction to be applied universally for all time and to all churches.

Perhaps, the solution to the apparent contradiction between 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and other Pauline texts like Galatians 3:28 can be found in the budding church structure that was emerging in the second century. The church structure of the second century can be found in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus (Pastoral Epistles).¹²² I believe that the Pastoral Epistles were written in the second century as opposed to the first century, and that they were not written by Paul. William O. Walker, Jr., in "The Theology of Woman's Place and the "Paulinist" Tradition," makes three statements to support his position that there is a common source for the writings of the New Testament that promote the subjugation of women.¹²³ He mentions the following points:

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² William O. Walker, Jr., "The Theology of Woman's Place" and the "Paulinist" Tradition" in *Semeia, The Bible and Feminist Hermeneutics* NO. 28, 1993, 101.

¹²³ Ibid.

(1) All of the New Testament passages supporting the principle of male dominance and female subordination (i.e. 1 Cor. 11:3-16; 14:34-35; Col. 3:18-19; Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; Titus 2:4-5; and 1 Pet. 3:1-7) can be traced to a common source, origin, or tradition. (2) This common source, origin, or tradition is to be located, not in the apostolic period or widely spread throughout the early church, but rather within one particular “wing” of early Christianity, namely, the “Paulinist” wing. (3) The passages in question reflect one aspect of a post-Pauline reaction against what can be termed the “radical egalitarianism” of Paul himself.¹²⁴

The Paulinist writings are considered to be post-Pauline.¹²⁵ A primary aim of the Pastorals was to support the church hierarchical structure that was taking shape in the second century and to control the powerful women of the early church. Linda M. Maloney in her article entitled “The Pastoral Epistles,” summarizes the results of her analysis of the pastorals in the following three points.

- 1) The rhetoric of the documents was prescriptive rather than descriptive. It reacts and seeks to change reality rather than painting its portrait. The inordinate amount of space given over to “correcting” the behavior of certain persons and groups in the community shows that those were the active forces against which the author is reacting.¹²⁶
- 2) Instead of looking at the scene through the Pastor’s eyes and taking his point of view as normative and “orthodox,” we have shifted the perspective to the persons and groups he opposes.¹²⁷
- 3) Although the author is careful not to name any individual women as opponents, a disproportionate amount of space is given over to prescribing norms of women’s behavior, a subject that is seldom overly discussed in Christian Testament writings. This indicates that women’s active participation and leadership in the target communities were at the center of the Pastor’s anxiety.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Ibid., 108.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Linda M. Maloney, “The Pastoral Epistles” in *Searching the Scriptures: Volume Two: A Feminist Community*, Elisabeth Shussler Fiorenza, ed. (New York, New York: Crossroads, 1994), 377-378.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

A Textual Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:11-12

If one interprets 1 Timothy 2:11-12 (KJV) as the inerrant word of God, then one is faced with the difficult reality that all women must be silent in the church and not teach or usurp authority over a man. Is this text to be applied across all cultures and all time, or was it written for a specific culture and time? If it is to be applied universally then women should not read announcements, sing, pray, teach, prophesy or preach in the church. Is the time approaching when the churches are to empty the choir boxes, and Sunday Schools, and have only men as the church secretaries and clerks? If, in fact, the text is to be followed, literally, no man should ever be taught by a woman. Yet Priscilla helped teach Apollos (Acts 18:26), Lois and Eunice helped in the development of Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15), and Phoebe was a deacon or overseer in Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1). As demonstrated earlier, in this paper, women not only taught, but also held leadership positions in the Old and New Testaments.

The writer of 1 Timothy addresses the letter to the leader of a Christian community in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3). Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger stress that there were connotations associated with this famous city.¹²⁹ In evaluating 1 Timothy 2:11-12, the culture must be considered.

Ephesus was located on the western shore of modern Turkey (Asia Minor), and it was the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire at the time of the writing of the letter to

¹²⁹ Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), 47.

Timothy.¹³⁰ Tradition holds that Ephesus was influenced by women warriors early in its history. Richard and Catherine Kroeger state, "In early times there had been a shrine to a female deity, and tradition held that the original image had been bought by Amazons, women warriors from the land of the Taurians on the Black Sea. This idol was first placed in an oak tree but was later removed to a sanctuary, about which the rest of the inhabitation grew."¹³¹ Ephesus was known as the gateway to Asia, and it had been influenced by many cultures.¹³² Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger state, "The city had passed under the sway of the Cimmerians and the Lydians, had lain under Persian domination for nearly two hundred years, and had passed too under the rule of Sardis, Macedonia, and Pergamum, and ultimately, Rome."¹³³

Unlike other parts of the ancient world, Asia Minor was influenced by a female deity called "The Great Mother of the Gods."¹³⁴ Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger state:

The Great Mother was given many names in different parts of Asia Minor, but she bore the same characteristics. Whether Great Mother of the Gods, the Mountain Mother, Ma, Bellona, Cybele, Demeter, or Artemis, she was the mother of the gods and men, the mistress of wild animals. From her came all life, and the dead were gathered again to her womb. She stood guard over the tombs of her devotees.¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid., 49.

¹³³ "All Asia was the possession of the Persian king, and all Ephesians became the spoils of war. They are unaccustomed to true freedom, that is to rule. Now they are likely to obey when they are given commands, or to wail aloud if they do not obey." Pseudo-Heraclitus of Ephesus Epistle 8 in Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), p. 49.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 50.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

First and second century Corinth worshipped of a female deity, also. The city was known for its worship of Aphrodite. Terry states:

The ancient city was noted for its military and commercial importance and its worship of the goddess of love, Aphrodite. On top of the Acrocorinth stood a temple dedicated to her, which Strabo reported had been staffed by “a thousand temple-slaves and courtesans, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess” (Geography 8.6.20 [378], quoted by Craig 1953, 4; Conzelman 1975, 12, expresses his disbelief of this figure). Prostitution was so rampant that “to corinthianize” became a verb meaning “to practice fornication,” especially in the Old Comedy (Morgan-Wynne 1983, 4; and Barnett 1968, 2).¹³⁶

The temple worship and the sexual perversion practiced in those temples would influence the way women were treated in first and second century Corinth. In the first and second century Christian church to have women in worship service with men was unusual. The presence of women in the worship service could label them as being cultic prostitutes, like the women that worshipped in the Temple of Aphrodite.¹³⁷ Women were not to be in the presence of men that were not their relatives in public.¹³⁸

The city center of Corinth boasted temples, sanctuaries, and altars to Apollo, *Asclepius* (the god of healing), Hermes, Artemis, Zeus, Dionysus, Heracles, Poseidon, Isis, and *Sarapis*.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ John Temple Bristow. *What Paul Really Said About Women*. (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row Publishers), 1988, 50.

¹³⁸ Bruce Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 52.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

The culture of first and second century Corinth had a significant effect on how women were treated and perceived in the Christian church. The desire for power and influence played a significant role in first and second century Corinth. Antoinette Wire in her "Introduction to 1 Corinthians" states:

The first century BCE was also the turning point in Rome's political life from an overgrown citizen-ruled city to an empire ruled by one man through his slaves, freedmen, and friends. Now everyone had to jockey for influence (even emperors could be assassinated), and influence came to be more and more identified with wealth. In Corinth the struggle for power was intensified by everyone bearing some stigma--the remnant Greek families for their disenfranchisement, most Roman citizens for their slave origins, rich merchants for their lack of education, powerful slave bureaucrats for their caste, women for family subordination, Jews for not honoring the gods. Yet many had some significant privilege, whether Roman citizenship or Greek pedigree or money or political influence or ethnic rights or at least membership in some new religious association.¹⁴⁰

It is clear that both Ephesus and Corinth were influenced by female deities. Both cities had temples dedicated to Artemis, which was one of the name of the "Great Mother of the Gods" mentioned above that was prevalent in Asia Minor.

While there existed a contingent of people that believed in female deities, there was a conflict in both Ephesus and Corinth, because of the influence of the Greeks. The Greek philosophers would help define women for years to come, even to the present time. Bristow states, "But it was Socrates (c. 470-399) who immortalized the Athenian disdain toward women."¹⁴¹ Socrates argued that being born a woman was divine punishment.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Antionette Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press 1990), 154.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁴² Ibid., 4.

Aristotle learned from Socrates and Plato about the inferiority of women. He formalized the practice of sexual discrimination and laid a philosophical foundation for the inferiority of women.¹⁴³ Centuries later, church leaders, who themselves were a product of Greek culture and education interpreted Paul's writings from the perspective of Aristotelian philosophy.¹⁴⁴

The Aristotelian codes of sexual discrimination were passed on to other cultures as a part of Hellenization.¹⁴⁵ These codes defined the role that women were to play in society. Women, in the first century, experienced some degree of liberation through their involvement with Jesus and Paul. Early church male leaders, seeking to control the liberated women of the first century Christian church, applied the Aristotelian codes to the church.

The Aristotelian codes were adopted by the Catholic Church fathers like Tertullian, Augustine, Jerome, and Clement of Alexandria.¹⁴⁶ Finally, it was Thomas Aquinas that contributed greatly to the subjugation of women based upon the Aristotelian codes, which later were known as the household (Haustafeln)¹⁴⁷ codes. John Temple Bristow states:

This tendency to interpret scripture from the viewpoint of Greek philosophy was finally given highest expression in the thirteenth century in the writings of Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274), whose

¹⁴³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 23-27.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 28-29.

¹⁴⁷ Clarice Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: "Free Slaves" and "Subordinate Women," *In Stony the Road We Trod*, 206-231 ed. Cain Hope Felder. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1991, 206.

gentile spirit and brilliant mind inspired those who knew him to refer to him as the Angelic Doctor. Aquinas did more than any other to systematize Christian beliefs and to harmonize them with Greek philosophy. In this monumental task, Aquinas interpreted the writings of Saint Paul through the mind of Aristotle, and the Greek depreciation of women became solidly infused within Christian theology.¹⁴⁸

The conflict in the culture of Asia Minor that revered the “Great Mother of the Gods” may have come into conflict with the Haustafeln codes in the Pastorals. The women were strong in Ephesus, and the status of the widows reflected their strength. I believe that the hierarchy expressed in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus (Pastorals) was indicative of the Haustafeln code that was followed by the Greco-Roman culture at the time. While I do believe that the church was trying to fit into that hierarchical structure, somewhat, I believe the more pressing problem to the church was the control of the women. Elizabeth A. Clark states,

Later New Testament books, especially the Pastoral Epistles, reveal Christianity’s growing conservatism toward women. By the second century, Christian writers presented the new religion to potential converts as one encouraging domestic order. Women were counseled to remain in their traditional roles of wife and mother, for the first time in Christianity, a theological justification was given that explains why women should not be permitted to teach or to have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:12-15). The Pastoral Epistles report that older women were allowed to enroll as “widows”; the group must have been popular, for 1 Timothy 5:3-16 seeks to raise the eligibility requirements. In literature from the late second century onward, however, the widows are a recognized group. They are commended for their prayers and pious deeds, but they are not permitted to clerical rank.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 29.

¹⁴⁹ Elizabeth A. Clark, “Women” in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, Second Edition, Volume 2* ed. Everett Ferguson (New York, New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 1182.

Presupposing that scripture was written in the second century to regulate women in the church provides an indication of the power that they had in the church. If there were no need to control the women to conform to a hierarchical structure that the early church sought, then there would not have been a need for scripture like

1 Corinthians 14:34-35 or 1 Timothy 2:11-12. Munro writes:

The teaching of the Pastorals and related material is polemic and prescriptive rather than entirely descriptive [Such material] bears witness to a different state of affairs with which it is at odds, and which it seeks to combat. Clearly there would have been no need to insist that women keep silent in Christian assemblies unless they were making themselves heard to a significant degree...the fact that the subordination of women receives particular emphasis in this material suggests the presence of an opposite tendency in the early Christian movement.¹⁵⁰

The Catholic Church's position on the Montanists is an example of trying to control the women leaders in the early church. The Montanists were considered to be heretical by many in the early church. One reason for dubbing the Montanist heretical was because two of the leaders in the church were women, Priscilla and Maximilla.¹⁵¹ Both Priscilla and Maximilla are listed above as prophetesses in the Montanist movement. Therefore, they would be two women preachers in the early church movement.

An interesting fact about the Montanists is that the Baptists claim them as one of their progenitors. Dr. J. M. Carol in his chart entitled "Trail of Blood" lists the Novations, Montanists, Paulicans and Waldenses as nicknames of Baptists during the passing years.¹⁵² I suppose those Baptists that hold to the theory that women are not to

¹⁵⁰ Munro, "Women, Text and the Canon," 30.

¹⁵¹ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, Second Edition, Volume 2, 1182.

¹⁵² Dr. J. M. Carrol, "The Trail of Blood" (accessed 15 January 2002); available from <http://www.trailofblood.com/The%20Trail%20Of%20Blood.htm>; Internet.

preach do not know that the Montanists, which they claim to be descended from, started with two women preachers.

Historical Foundations

This section of the paper will address three areas: (1) the history of the National Baptist Convention, (2) the historical setting out of which the texts emerged that are used to deny or limit the contributions of women preachers, and (3) the history of women preachers that is not recorded in the Bible. Before we address the historical setting of the text and reflect on the history of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. or the history of women preachers, we need to understand what the current position of the NBC, Inc. is, concerning women preachers. Therefore, the first area to be addressed in this paper is the current position of the NBC, Inc.

The Current Position of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, in *The Black Church in the African American Experience* state, "Ostensibly in defense of the authority and autonomy of local churches, none of the national conventions has taken a formal stand either for or against the ordination of women."¹⁵³ Not having a clear policy on the issue of women preachers has caused some confusion among black Baptist churches. Attitudes vary from church to church concerning the issue of women preachers.

¹⁵³ Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 44.

Lincoln and Mamiya use a quote from Rev. Dr. T. J. Jemison, former president of the NBC to express the vaguely oppressive position of the convention toward women preachers:

It is not widely known that the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. has had three women pastors within the past twenty-five years. One of those pastors was Rev. Trudy Trim of Chicago, who assumed that role following the death of her husband. She too recently passed. Also when Rev. Plummer of Cleveland, Ohio became ill, his wife carried on in his absence. Many of our churches today have women assistants. The secretary of our convention, Dr. Richardson, is pastor of the Grace Church in Mount Vernon, New York. His assistant pastor is a woman, Rev. Flora Bridges. The editor of our convention's newspaper is Rev. Rosco Cooper of Richmond, Virginia. The assistant in his church is also female. I welcome women and have nothing against them. Of course, most Baptists will come to accept this very slowly. My father was adamantly against this trend and so are most of my colleagues.¹⁵⁴

As an example of the confusion that can result due to the lack of a written policy, Lincoln and Mamiya cite the following case, "The Baptist Ministers Conference of Baltimore, for example, has admitted a number of women pastors to its membership since 1979. The neighboring conference of Washington, D.C., on the other hand, severed its relationship with the Baltimore Conference in protest of this action."¹⁵⁵

While some might imply that there is confusion over the issue of women preachers, still others would say that there is no confusion about the oppression that women preachers experience in the NBC Lincoln and Mamiya state:

¹⁵⁴ Anqunett Fusilier, editor, "National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc. Socio-Economic Programs Sweep The Nation Under the Leadership of Dr. T.J. Jemison," *The Cornerstone*, 22 quoted in C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1994), 296-297.

¹⁵⁵ Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 44-45.

While there is no specific policy against the ordination of women in any of the black Baptist denominations, the general climate has not been supportive of women preaching, and pastoring churches. In recent years, however, there has been a small minority of black clergymen who have sponsored women candidates for ordination in their associations. The Baptist principal of congregational autonomy has been helpful in these cases since the independence of each church and pastor cannot be challenged by any denominational authority.¹⁵⁶

To stress the oppression that many women preachers feel I have cited the following quote from Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* as examples;

In the sanctuary of a black Baptist church in Chicago in 1971 at a meeting of the National Committee of Black Churchmen, the following incident took place. Two black women approached the pulpit at different times during the meeting; one was a theology student, so that she could place a recording device; and the other was a Presbyterian Church executive, who wished to address the committee. The pastor approached each woman and asked her to remove herself from the pulpit area, explaining that the women church officers had passed a ruling that no woman could stand behind the pulpit for any reason. They wanted to ensure that no woman would be elevated over another in the church, and they insisted that the image of the clergy should remain exclusively male. This incident is one illustration of the fact that traditionally in the Black Church, the pulpit has been viewed as "men's space" and the pew as "women's place."¹⁵⁷

The male-dominated black Baptist ministerial association, which has met on Mondays for years at Covenant Baptist Church in New York City, only last year voted to accept black female ministers. But a female minister working as an associate pastor at one of the most prominent and prosperous Baptist churches in Brooklyn, New York, tells of other male associate ministers (her colleagues) who put obstacles in her way by trying to refuse her even the space in which to work. She tells of not receiving her paycheck on time and feeling as if she has to beg to be paid for the work she has

¹⁵⁶ Fusilier, editor, "National Baptist Convention U.S.A.," 287.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 274.

done. Finally, the major minister of this famous African American Baptist church told her she was a “pain in the butt” and fired her when she asked for the pay that was due her at Christmas time.¹⁵⁸

From these examples, it is clear that even though autonomy is a part of Baptist polity, the recognition of women preachers in one congregation can cause that congregation to lose fellowship with other congregations that are opposed to women preachers. We can also see from the aforementioned examples that a woman that is a recognized preacher in one congregation may not be shown the respect that she deserves from members of another congregation.

I confirmed the position of the NBC, Inc. concerning women preachers in a telephone interview with Dr. Charles Brown, President of the Ohio Baptist General Convention, on November 20, 2002.¹⁵⁹ Brown stated that he did not know of any policy at the national level.¹⁶⁰ The Ohio Baptist General Convention, however, has adopted a policy that states, “Women preachers will not be recognized in the life of the convention.”¹⁶¹ In other words, the local church still has the autonomy to have women preachers, but women preachers will not be recognized as preachers by the Ohio Baptist General Convention.

Brown stated that the Western Union, which is a part of the Ohio Baptist General Convention, actually adopted a policy that prohibits women preachers.¹⁶² There were

¹⁵⁸ Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2000), 207.

¹⁵⁹ Dr. Charles Brown, interviewed by author, 20 November 2002, Springfield, Ohio, telephone.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Wood, ed., “Minutes of the Ninety-Ninth Annual Session of the Ohio Baptist General Convention held at Mt. Herman Baptist Church,” 16-18.

¹⁶² Ibid.

some churches disciplined in the 1980's for having women preachers. Even though this policy has been adopted, it is not being enforced.¹⁶³ Some churches have been ostracized as a result of having women preachers. In the Dayton area Baptist ministerial association, some churches will not fellowship with those that have ordained women preachers.¹⁶⁴ Brown did not believe that a policy that prohibits women preachers should infringe upon the autonomy of the local church. In Baptist doctrine, the local church is autonomous. Therefore, one church is not to exercise authority over another.¹⁶⁵

Brown did point out that the National Progressive Baptist Convention (NPBC) is in support of women preachers. Rev. Thelma Chambers-Young, Ph.D., President of the Progressive National Baptist Women, states:

Nationally the Progressive National Baptist Convention does not have a doctrinal statement concerning women in ministry, however, the national body affirms women in leadership by stating in the constitution and by-laws that we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Our state convention, the Progressive Oklahoma Baptist State Convention, Inc., does have a statement which reads as follow; "We accept the autonomy of each local congregation. However, we believe that both women and men are gifted for service in the church in any and all capacities. The role of Pastor and Minister are positions filled by God, therefore we allow God to determine who will be called (Joel 2:28-29; Galatians 3:28; Acts 2:17-18)."¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Everett C. Goodwin, *The New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1995), 16.

¹⁶⁶ Thelma Chambers-Young, "Doctrinal Statement of the Oklahoma State Convention of the Progressive National Baptist Convention," interviewed by author, 30 October 2002, Springfield, Ohio, e-mail.

While there is still no national statement or policy of the PNBC in support of women preachers, the statement adopted by the state convention in Oklahoma is a move toward recognizing the gifts of women preachers. The NBC should move toward a policy similar to the one adopted by the Oklahoma Baptist Convention, Inc in the National Progressive Baptist Convention as listed above.

By having no written statement, it is difficult to address the issue. While there is no official written position on women preachers in the NBC, there is an unwritten rule of subjugation. The reason cited by members of the NBC for denying women the pulpit are the scriptural references that state that women are to be silent or subjugated to male dominance, like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12. The unwritten position that is prevalent in the NBC is one similar to the written position of the Southern Baptist Convention position on women preachers.

The official position of the Southern Baptist Convention on women in ministry is as follows:

Women participate equally with men in the priesthood of all believers. Their role is crucial, their wisdom, grace and commitment exemplary, women are an integral part of our Southern Baptist boards, faculties, mission teams, writer pools, and professional staffs. We affirm and celebrate their great commission impact.

While scripture teaches that a woman's role is not identical to that of men in every respect, and that pastoral leadership is assigned to men, it also teaches that women are equal in value to men.¹⁶⁷

The position of the Southern Baptist Convention on women in ministry could be stated as the position of many churches in the NBC, Inc. It is interesting that the NBC, Inc.

¹⁶⁷ "Women in Ministry," in SBC Position Statements-Women in Ministry (January 2003, accessed 10 March 2003); available from <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/pswomen.asp>; Internet.

would embrace such a position in light of the fact that the Southern Baptist Convention was formed, in part, in support of slavery. Perhaps it is a coincidence that many in the NBC, Inc. embrace such a position or perhaps there is a reason why this national body that fought so hard for freedom would support an oppressive system that shackles the rights of many of their sisters. In the next section of the paper, I will explore how the NBC, Inc. was formed.

Understanding that the position of the NBC, Inc. concerning women preachers is unwritten, yet clearly limiting, we look to the foundation for this position. The first area that we will investigate is the historical setting out of which the texts emerged that have been used to limit the contributions of women preachers.

Historical Setting of the Text

The two scriptures that are quoted the most often by those that believe that women should not preach are 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

- 34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.
- 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

1 Timothy 2:11-12

- 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
- 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

I will evaluate both 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 in this section of the paper. To begin the analysis of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, we need to understand the

culture of first and second century Corinth. The city of Corinth was a commercial center. It was located at the crossroads of a major land route from north to south and a major sea route from east to west.¹⁶⁸

Corinth was not only noted for its commercial importance, but for its worship of Aphrodite. Terry states:

The ancient city was noted for its military and commercial importance and its worship of the goddess of love, Aphrodite. On top of the Acrocorinth stood a temple dedicated to her, which Strabo reported had been staffed by “a thousand temple-slaves and courtesans, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess” (Geography 8.6.20 [&378], quoted by Craig 1953, 4; Conzelman 1975, 12, expresses his disbelief of this figure). Prostitution was so rampant that “to corinthianize” became a verb meaning ‘to practice fornication,’ especially in the Old Comedy (Morgan-Wynne 1983, 4; and Barnett 1968, 2).¹⁶⁹

The temple worship and the sexual perversion practiced in those temples would influence the way women were treated in first and second century Corinth. In the first and second century Christian church to have women in worship service with men was unusual. The presence of women in the worship service could label them as being cultic prostitutes, like the women that worshipped in the Temple of Aphrodite.¹⁷⁰ Women were not to be in the presence of men that were not their relatives in public.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Ralph Bruce Terry, “Dissertation: A Discourse Analysis of 1 Corinthians, Situation and Background, The City of Corinth,” (May 1993, accessed 16 October 2002); available from http://bible.ovc.edu/terry/dissertation/2_4-aspects.htm; Internet; accessed October 16, 2002.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ John Temple Bristow. *What Paul Really Said About Women*. (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row Publishers), 1988, 50.

¹⁷¹ Bruce Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 52.

Although Athens was named for the goddess Athena, it was a city that oppressed women. Bristow states, "Athens was named after the lovely goddess of wisdom. How ironic that a system of philosophy that maintains that females are in all ways inferior to males should originate in a city named after a female deity who embodied wisdom!"¹⁷² The Greek philosophers would help define women for years to come, even to the present time. Bristow states, "But it was Socrates (c. 470-399) who immortalized the Athenian disdain toward women."¹⁷³ Socrates argued that being born a woman was divine punishment.¹⁷⁴

Aristotle learned from Socrates and Plato about the inferiority of women. He formalized the practice of sexual discrimination and laid a philosophical foundation for the inferiority of women.¹⁷⁵ Centuries later, church leaders, who themselves were a product of Greek culture and education interpreted Paul's writings from the perspective of Aristotelian philosophy.¹⁷⁶

The Aristotelian codes of sexual discrimination were passed on to other cultures as a part of Hellenization.¹⁷⁷ These codes defined the role that women were to play in society. Women, in the first century, experienced some degree of liberation through their involvement with Jesus and Paul. Early church male leaders, seeking to control the

¹⁷² Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 3. John Temple Bristow. *What Paul Really Said About Women*. (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 3.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 23-27.

liberated women of the first century Christian church, applied the Aristotelian codes to the church.

The Aristotelian codes were adopted by the Catholic Church fathers like Tertullian, Augustine, Jerome, and Clement of Alexandria.¹⁷⁸ Finally, it was Thomas Aquinas that contributed greatly to the subjugation of women based upon the Aristotelian codes, which later were known as the household (Haustafeln)¹⁷⁹ codes. John Temple Bristow states:

This tendency to interpret scripture from the viewpoint of Greek philosophy was finally given highest expression in the thirteenth century in the writings of Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274), whose gentile spirit and brilliant mind inspired those who knew him to refer to him as the Angelic Doctor. Aquinas did more than any other to systematize Christian beliefs and to harmonize them with Greek philosophy. In this monumental task, Aquinas interpreted the writings of Saint Paul through the mind of Aristotle, and the Greek depreciation of women became solidly infused within Christian theology.¹⁸⁰

It appears that many in the NBC, Inc. have adopted the same Haustafeln codes that were originated with Socrates and adopted by the first and second century Corinthian church. These codes have contributed to the position of subjugation concerning women that many churches adhere to.

The culture of first and second century Corinth had a significant effect on how women were treated and perceived in the Christian church. Antoinette Wire in her "Introduction to 1 Corinthians" states:

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 28-29.

¹⁷⁹ Clarice Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: "Free Slaves" and "Subordinate Women," *In Stony the Road We Trod*, 206-231 ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1991), 206.

¹⁸⁰ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 29.

The first century BCE was also the turning point in Rome's political life from an overgrown citizen-ruled city to an empire ruled by one man through his slaves, freedmen, and friends. Now everyone had to jockey for influence (even emperors could be assassinated), and influence came to be more and more identified with wealth. In Corinth the struggle for power was intensified by everyone bearing some stigma--the remnant Greek families for their disenfranchisement, most Roman citizens for their slave origins, rich merchants for their lack of education, powerful slave bureaucrats for their caste, women for family subordination, Jews for not honoring the gods. Yet many had some significant privilege, whether Roman citizenship or Greek pedigree or money or political influence or ethnic rights or at least membership in some new religious association.¹⁸¹

In first century Corinth, Paul found himself confronted with a culture that was insecure.¹⁸² The social structure had been upset with the onset of the Roman Empire.¹⁸³ The Roman senators, Stoic popular philosophers, and Jewish communities with rights of self-rule had less confidence.¹⁸⁴

For women to be in worship with men was unusual. The women worshipped separately in the Jewish culture.¹⁸⁵ Bristow writes, "However restrictive such an arrangement might seem to us today, the Jewish custom of having women present at all during worship was innovative among ancient cultures in general."¹⁸⁶ In the Mediterranean world, to have women in worship was, often, associated with cultic

¹⁸¹ Antionette Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1990), 154.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Bristow, *What Paul Really Said About Women*, 50.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

prostitution.¹⁸⁷ It was shameful for women to be in the presence of men that were not their relatives.¹⁸⁸

Although the hierarchical codes established by Socrates (Haustafeln) were active, the Christian church in Corinth may have been experiencing what Gerd Thiessen called “love-patriarchalism.”¹⁸⁹ Thiessen states, “The model for love-patriarchalism is found in the family, that is the structured form of differentiated roles and status. The religious ingredient in patriarchalism is love, which reduces friction within the differentiated structure.”¹⁹⁰

The love-patriarchalism that Thiessen spoke of came about as a result of the new freedom those women in the Christian church came to experience through the ministry of Jesus and, now, Paul. While women had been limited in education and political power in Corinth, they were beginning to have influence in the Christian church. Two major reasons why they were gaining influence was: (1) the churches were held in homes owned by women, and (2) many women were widely respected for having prophetic powers.¹⁹¹

The freedom experienced by many women in the first century Christian church exposed a new group to the worship service, women. There were also new Gentile converts that had not been familiar with Jewish or Christian worship. How people were

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Bruce Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 52.

¹⁸⁹ Gerd Thiessen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Edinburg, Scotland: T&T Clark, 1982), 14.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Wire, “1 Corinthians: Introduction,” 156.

supposed to act in worship service was not clear to many. I believe the writer of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 sought to obtain order and to resolve conflict in the first or second century Christian church. Thiessen states, "Within the frame of reference emphasis fell on serving "social needs," which he typologizes as of two types, the production of order and the control of conflict."¹⁹²

One way that order was regulated in first or second-century Corinth was through the understanding of honor and shame. The first century Corinthian understanding of honor and shame was an extension of the *Haustafeln* codes. These codes revered the husband, father, and master and subjugated the wife, children, and slaves.¹⁹³

Honor and shame were important values in first and second century Corinth, and the effect of those codes is felt today. To understand the significance of honor and shame in the first century Corinthian church, we must step outside of our own culture. The culture in the United States today is not the same as the Mediterranean culture today or in the past. The United States culture focuses on the individual, while the Mediterranean culture focuses upon the family.

Bruce J. Malina, in his work, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* states:

The social institution upon which most Americans focus their attention, interests, and concerns is economics. When the average family is in difficulty, it is invariably due to the fact that the U.S. provisioning system, the system of jobs, of goods and services production and consumption, is in trouble. In this framework, the organizing principal of life in this country is instrumental

¹⁹² Thiessen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity*, 17.

¹⁹³ Martin, "The *Haustafeln* (Household Codes) in *African American Biblical Interpretation: Free Slaves and Subordinate Women*", 208.

mastery—the individual’s ability to control his or her environment, personal and impersonal, to attain a quantity-oriented success: wealth, ownership, “good looks,” proper grades, and all other countable indications of success.¹⁹⁴

The focal institution in the Mediterranean culture is and has been kinship or the family. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the family was the main production and consumption unit in the United States, which made it the main focal institution.¹⁹⁵ The family, however, is no longer the main focal institution in this country.

When the family is the focal institution of a culture, the organizing principle of life is belongingness.¹⁹⁶ When a person’s identity is connected to belonging to a family, that person’s importance depends on their ability to adhere to the traditional rules or order for that family unit. Malina states, “The traditional rules or order are rooted in the complimentary codes surrounding the basic values of honor and shame.”¹⁹⁷

Karen Jo Torjesen, in her book, *When Women Were Priests*, states, “A woman’s honor was her good reputation, and had always to do with a reputation of chastity.”¹⁹⁸ Torjesen goes on to say, “A woman’s publicly demonstrable chastity establishes her social worth and affects the social worth of a kinship group.”¹⁹⁹ Malina says, “Female honor is symbolized by the maiden-head (hymen) and stands for female sexual

¹⁹⁴ Malina, *The New Testament World*, 30.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Torjesen, *When Women Were Priests*, 136.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 140.

exclusiveness, discretion, shyness, restraint, and timidity.”²⁰⁰ The women of Corinth had a place and certain actions that they were allowed to do. That place and those actions were where females were to interact exclusively, such as the kitchen and using kitchen utensils, the public well and drawing water, spinning and sewing, the public oven and bread baking, sweeping out the house, et cetera—all these female spaces and things are central to the family dwelling or village residence.²⁰¹ Females were to turn to the inside toward their space in the house.

Male honor, on the other hand, was symbolized by their masculinity. He was to protect the women and challenge the boundaries of another male through their women.²⁰² Sexual purity was not a symbol of the male’s honor.

Torjesen states, “Women who undertook leadership roles in their communities like Lydia, Lucilla, and Livia, crossed the boundaries in to the male domain.”²⁰³ When women accepted public office, received titles of honor, or asserted the status of their family, they were competing for male symbols of honor, like courage, justice, and self-mastery.²⁰⁴ It was at those moments that the woman was the furthest from demonstrating the female virtues of chastity, silence, and obedience. Torjesen, states, “Women’s practice of leadership came into conflict with the entrenched gender ideology of separate domains and distinct male and female virtues.”²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Malina, *The New Testament World*, 49.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid., 143.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

Paul deals with the conflict when he instructs women to cover their heads when they prophesied in the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 11:5. He accused women of being shameless if they did not wear a veil (1 Corinthians 11:6). Torjesen states, “Furthermore, Paul contended, women prophets would be perceived as refusing their female role of passivity, deference, and submission to authority if they did not wear veils. Wearing veils would make it clear that they recognized the precedence of man over woman and the authority of male over female.”²⁰⁶

The issue of shame came into play in 1 Corinthians 14:35 when Paul or a post-Pauline writer states that it is a shame for women to speak in the assembly. The shame that he referred to was that associated with cultural norms at the time. In my opinion, telling the women to keep silent in the church was consistent with second-century Corinth and inconsistent with the first-century Corinthian church that Paul was active in. Paul was breaking from the traditional norms of first-century Corinth by having women pray and prophesy in the church as indicated in 1 Corinthians 11:5. The silencing of women would be more consistent with the second-century.

After reviewing the historical context of the writing of 1 Corinthians, I now turn to an evaluation of the Ephesus, the location that 1 Timothy was addressed to.

The writer of 1 Timothy addresses the letter to the leader of a Christian community in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3). Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger stress that there were connotations associated with this famous city.²⁰⁷ In evaluating 1 Timothy 2:11-12, the culture must be considered.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 145.

²⁰⁷ Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), p. 47.

Ephesus was located on the western shore of modern Turkey (Asia Minor), and it was the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire at the time of the writing of the letter to Timothy.²⁰⁸ Tradition holds that Ephesus was influenced by women warriors early in its history. Richard and Catherine Kroeger state, "In early times there had been a shrine to a female deity, and tradition held that the original image had been bought by Amazons, women warriors from the land of the Taurians on the Black Sea. This idol was first placed in an oak tree but was later removed to a sanctuary, about which the rest of the inhabitation grew."²⁰⁹ Ephesus was known as the gateway to Asia, and it had been influenced by many cultures.²¹⁰ Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger state, "The city had passed under the sway of the Cimmerians and the Lydians, had lain under Persian domination for nearly two hundred years, and had passed too under the rule of Sardis, Macedonia, and Pergamum, and ultimately, Rome."²¹¹

Unlike other parts of the ancient world, Asia Minor was influenced by a female deity called "The Great Mother of the Gods."²¹² Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger state:

The Great Mother was given many names in different parts of Asia Minor, but she bore the same characteristics. Whether Great Mother of the Gods, the Mountain Mother, Ma, Bellona, Cybele, Demeter, or Artemis, she was the mother of the gods and men, he

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 49.

²¹¹ "All Asia was the possession of the Persian king, and all Ephesians became the spoils of war. They are unaccustomed to true freedom, that is to rule. Now they are likely to obey when they are given commands, or to wail aloud if they do not obey." Pseudo-Heraclitus of Ephesus Epistle 8 in Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003), p. 49.

²¹² Ibid., 50.

mistress of wild animals. From her came all life, and the dead were gathered again to her womb. She stood guard over the tombs of her devotees.²¹³

Like Ephesus, the city center of Corinth boasted temples, sanctuaries, and altars to Apollo, Asclepius (the god of healing), Hermes, Artemis, Zeus, Dionysus, Heracles, Poseidon, Isis, and Sarapis²¹⁴

It is clear that both Ephesus and Corinth were influenced by female deities. Both cities had temples dedicated to Artemis, which was one of the names of the "Great Mother of the Gods" mentioned above that was prevalent in Asia Minor.

While there existed a contingent of people that believed in female deities, there was a conflict in both Ephesus and Corinth, because of the influence of the Greeks. The Greek philosophers had adopted and promulgated the *Haustafeln* codes.

The conflict in the culture of Asia Minor that revered the "Great Mother of the Gods" may have come into conflict with the *Haustafeln* codes expressed in the Pastorals. The women were strong in Ephesus, and the status of the widows reflected their strength. I believe that the hierarchy expressed in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus (Pastorals) was indicative of the *Haustafeln* code that was followed by the Greco-Roman culture at the time. While I do believe that the church was trying to fit into that hierarchical structure, somewhat, I believe the more pressing problem to the church was the control of the women. Elizabeth A. Clark states,

Later New Testament books, especially the Pastoral Epistles, reveal Christianity's growing conservatism toward women. By the second century, Christian writers presented the new religion to potential converts as one encouraging domestic order. Women

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

were counseled to remain in their traditional roles of wife and mother, for the first time in Christianity, a theological justification was given that explains why women should not be permitted to teach or to have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:12-15). The Pastoral Epistles report that older women were allowed to enroll as "widows"; the group must have been popular, for 1 Timothy 5:3-16 seeks to raise the eligibility requirements. In literature from the late second century onward, however, the widows are a recognized group. They are commended for their prayers and pious deeds, but they are not permitted to clerical rank.²¹⁵

Presupposing that scripture was written in the second century to regulate women in the church provides an indication of the power that they had in the church. If there were no need to control the women to conform to the hierarchical structure that the early church sought then there would not have been a need for scripture like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 or 1 Timothy 2:11-12. Munro writes:

The teaching of the Pastorals and related material is polemic and prescriptive rather than entirely descriptive... [Such material] bears witness to a different state of affairs with which it is at odds, and which it seeks to combat. Clearly there would have been no need to insist that women keep silent in Christian assemblies unless they were making themselves heard to a significant degree... the fact that the subordination of women receives particular emphasis in this material suggests the presence of an opposite tendency in the early Christian movement.²¹⁶

One example of the conflict with women leadership in the early church was the Montanist movement. As stated earlier, the Montanist movement had its beginnings in Asia Minor. In this movement, women held positions of prominence. Those in Ephesus that were a part of the Montanist movement were referred to as Montanists from

²¹⁵ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, Second Edition, Volume 2* ed. Everett Ferguson (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 1182.

²¹⁶ Munro, "Women, Text and the Canon," 30.

Phrygia.²¹⁷ The Montanists were considered to be heretical by many in the early church.

Elizabeth A. Clark states:

Catholic Christianity's wish to distinguish itself from sects that it deemed either schismatic or heretical provided another reason for church authorities to limit women's roles, since some of these sects permitted higher positions of leadership to women. Two women prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla, were hailed by Montanists as among their founders and were said to enjoy direct revelations of the Holy Spirit (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 8.12; Eusebius, *H.E.* 5.16). Montanist women may also have baptized and celebrated the eucharist (Cyprian, *Ep.* 75[74].10; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 49.2). And some Gnostic groups, according to the church fathers, allowed women to serve as priests and to baptize (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 6.35; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.12.1-2; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 42.4; Tertullian, *Praeser.* 41). Catholic women were thus told not to seek such offices.²¹⁸

From the above statement, it would follow that some of the early female preachers outside of the Bible would be Montanist or Gnostic. Both Priscilla and Maximilla are listed above as prophetesses in the Montanist movement. Therefore, they would be two women preachers in the early church movement.

To gain a better understanding of the position of the NBC, Inc. on women preachers, we will review the history of the National Baptist Convention, from which came the NBC, Inc.

History of the National Baptist Convention

How could the black Baptists that fought so hard for freedom overlook the women that suffered under oppressive rules (written and unwritten), and at the hands of those men that should have been edifying them? From the start of the importation of African Americans into America to the establishment of an organized African American

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, Second Edition, Volume 2, 1182.

church would take nearly two centuries.²¹⁹ It is ironic that those who sought religious, political, and economic freedom in this country, introduced one of the most oppressive systems of slavery that the world has ever known.²²⁰

In an effort to deal with the oppression of the whites, in the USA, black denominations grew out of a desire of the African Americans to be free to worship in their own way and to determine with whom they would worship. Though there had been a desire to worship with some of the established religious bodies after the Civil War, racial bias helped to reinforce the need for independent black churches. The organization of black churches soon gave way to the organization of black denominations.

The roots of Black denominations can be found in the enslavement of millions of Africans in the United States of America. From the brutality of the institution of slavery that sought to deny black people their humanity emerged independent black churches and denominations. The slaves responded to the oppression of the white slave owner's religion and preaching by forming their own method of worship, preaching and resistance known as the "invisible institution."²²¹

The slave trade to the United States had ended by 1810, eliminating the importation of African culture, and creating religious practices that were truly "African American."²²² The tent meetings and evangelism associated with the second "great

²¹⁹ Wardell J. Payne, ed., *Directory of African American Religious Bodies: A Compendium by the Howard University School of Divinity* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1991), 1.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York, New York: Schocken Books, 1974), 23.

²²² Laura Maffly-Kipp, "African American Religion in the Nineteenth Century" (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, National Humanities Center, October 2000, accessed 10 January 2003); available from <http://www.nhc.rtp.nc:8080/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/nafrican.htm>; Internet.

awakening” of the late 18th and early 19th centuries helped to spawn African American denominationalism.²²³ Laurie Maffly-Kipp, in her article entitled, “African-American Religion in the Nineteenth Century,” states:

In the southern states, where the institution of slavery still prevailed, increasing numbers of slaves converted to religions such as the Methodist and Baptist faiths. Many clergy within these denominations actively promoted the idea that all Christians were equal in the sight of God, a message that provided hope to the slaves. They also encouraged worship in the ways that many Africans found to be similar, or at least adaptable, to the African worship patterns, with enthusiastic singing, clapping, dancing, and even spirit-possession.²²⁴

There was a fear, among white slave owners that slaves, if given the opportunity, would rebel. Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, in *African American Religion in the Twentieth Century*, write:

Still, many white owners insisted on slave attendance at white-controlled churches, since they were fearful that if slaves were allowed to worship independently they would ultimately plot rebellion against their owners. At the white controlled services slaves were required to sit in separate galleries on one side, in the rear, or in the balcony of the sanctuary. They were usually not expected to play an active role in the service, except perhaps in the singing of white hymns.²²⁵

²²³ James Melvin Washington, *Frustrated Fellowship: The Black Baptist Quest for Social Power* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press), 12.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

²²⁵ See, e.g., Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, *African American Religion in the Twentieth Century: Varieties of Protest and Accommodation* (Knoxville, Tennessee: the University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 11.

Sometimes white preachers would deliver special sermons to the slaves after the regular morning service or later in the afternoon. Needless to say, these sermons generally instructed the slaves to “obey your masters.”²²⁶

Since slaves did not find services in white controlled churches to be especially meaningful, they resented the requirement to attend. The resentment to attend is reflected in the fact that by the end of the 18th century, only about 4 to 5 percent of blacks were enrolled on the rosters of Christian churches.²²⁷

Seeking to worship in their own way and out of disgust for the Gospel preached by their master’s preachers, slaves formed their own uniquely black institution called the “invisible institution.”²²⁸ The key to an understanding of the “invisible institution” may be found in the typical remark of an ex-slave who writes:

Our preachers were usually plantation folks like the rest of us. Some man who had a little education and had been taught something about the Bible would be our preacher. The colored folks had their code of religion, not nearly so complicated as the white man’s religion, but more closely observed. When we had our meetings of this kind, we held them in our own way and were not interfered with by white folks.²²⁹

Given the racism of white Christians, the movement toward religious separatism was welcomed by both free Blacks and slaves. Slaves frequently met for services apart from whites whenever the opportunity arose to be free from the white supervised religious meetings on the plantations. In addition to Sunday evening services, the slaves

²²⁶ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 19.

²²⁷ Payne, ed., *Directory*, 1.

²²⁸ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 23.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

conducted religious meetings at the end of the workday, one or more times a week.²³⁰

These services often lasted until the early hours of the morning. Such meetings were conducted in the slave quarters, “praise houses,” “hush arbors,” or deep in the woods, swamps of caverns.²³¹

The slaves had to turn to the “invisible institution” for Christian teaching and preaching that suited their situation. Lucretia Alexander explain what the slaves did when they grew tired of the white folk’s preacher:

The preacher cam and ... He’d just say, “Serve your masters. Don’t steal your master’s turkey. Don’t steal your master’s chickens. Don’t steal your master’s hawgs. Don’t steal your master’s meat. Do whatsoever your master tells you to do. Same old thing all the time. My father would have church in dwelling houses and they had to whisper Sometimes they would have church at his house. That would be when they would want a real meetin’ with some real preachin’ They used to sing their songs in a whisper and pray in a whisper. That was a prayer-meeting from house to house once or twice – once or twice a week.”²³²

The “invisible institution” was the birthplace of the spirituals and the preaching style of the slave preacher. Maffly–Kipp writes:

It was in the “invisible institution” that the spirituals, with their double meanings of religious salvation and freedom from slavery, developed and flourished. The black preachers, those who believed that God had called them to speak his word, also polished their “chanterd sermons,” or rhythmic intoned style or extemporaneous preaching in the invisible institutions. Part church, part psychological refuge, and part organizing point for occasional acts of outright rebellion, these meetings provided one of the few ways

²³⁰ Baer and Singer, *African American Religion*, 13.

²³¹ Frazier, *The Negro Church in America*, 23-25.

²³² Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 214.

for enslaved African Americans to express and enact their hopes for a better future.²³³

From the invisible institution of the South, would come independent black churches. The first black churches to emerge from the South were Baptist churches. Lincoln and Mamiya state:

The first two independent black Baptist churches to be formed were the African Baptist or "Bluestone" church on the William Byrd plantation near Bluestone River in Mecklenburg, Virginia, in 1758 and the Silver Bluff Baptist Church, located on the South Carolina bank of the Savannah River not far from Augusta, Georgia.²³⁴ Although historical records indicate that the Silver Bluff Church was established by a slave by the name of named George Liele some time between 1773 and 1775, the cornerstone of the present church building claims a founding date of 1750.²³⁵

While the "invisible institution" existed in the South, freed blacks in the northern states enjoyed a greater measure of freedom. Frazier states, "In the North the free Negroes could acquire some education openly, while in the South they had to secure education in surreptitiously or through their own efforts."²³⁶ Like their southern counterparts, the free northern blacks were drawn to evangelical Protestant churches. Though a message of racial equality was frequently preached in the white churches, it was not always practiced. In the 1790's black leaders began to form their own independent black churches.

²³³ Laura Maffly-Kipp, "African American Religion in the Nineteenth Century" (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, National Humanities Center, October 2000, accessed 10 January 2003); available from <http://www.nhc.rtp.nc:8080/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/nafrican.htm>; Internet.

²³⁴ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 23.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Frazier, *The Negro Church*, 28.

The communities of freed blacks in the North concentrated much of their effort toward the development of mutual aid societies to aid blacks where the white government and institutions had failed.²³⁷ From the mutual aid societies would develop independent Black churches.

How did black denominations start? From the “invisible institution” of the South and the independent churches of the North came the quest for freedom of expression in worship and freedom from the oppressive discrimination of the white churches. This quest for freedom would give birth to independent Black churches and denominations.

The first black Baptist group, the Providence Baptist Association of Ohio, was formed in 1836.²³⁸ The first attempt to form a national organization occurred in 1880 with the creation of the Foreign Mission Baptist Convention of Montgomery, Alabama.²³⁹ In 1886 the American National Convention was organized at St. Louis, and in 1893 the National Baptist Educational Convention was begun in the District of Columbia.²⁴⁰ All three conventions were merged in 1895 in Atlanta to form the National Baptist Convention of America.²⁴¹

In 1915 there was a split in the convention over the issue of who would own the publishing house.²⁴² The faction that split off became known as the National Baptist Convention, Unincorporated, while the former or original convention became the

²³⁷ Payne, ed., *Directory*, 2.

²³⁸ Leroy Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1985), 51.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 76-78.

²⁴¹ Frank S. Mead, *Handbook of Denominations in the United States, Ninth Edition* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1990), 43-44.

²⁴² Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists*, 92-93.

National Baptist Convention, Incorporated.²⁴³ The National Baptist Convention, Unincorporated became the National Baptist Convention of America, while the National Baptist Convention, Incorporated became the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Incorporated.²⁴⁴

There was a subsequent split in 1961 to form the Progressive National Baptist Convention over tenure and social involvement. The PNB is in support of women in ministry as has been mentioned in chapter two of this paper.

Another split occurred in 1988 to form the National Missionary Baptist Convention. This convention separated from the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. The issue of control of entities like the Sunday Church School, Baptist Training Union Congress and the National Baptist publishing Board, Inc. was at the forefront of the decision to split.²⁴⁵ The National Missionary Baptist Convention of America remains loyal to the National Baptist Publishing Board, Inc.

Another organization that has emerged from the black Baptists is the Baptist Full Gospel Fellowship. It was formed in 1994 under the direction of Paul S. Morton.²⁴⁶ They are not called a denomination.²⁴⁷

Jacqueline Trussell, in her article entitled, "The Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship: Giving Baptists a Choice," states, "the focus of the Full Gospel Fellowship is on two contrasting additions to traditional African American Baptist church history, (1) a more

²⁴³ Ibid. 95.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Payne, ed., *Directory*, 47.

²⁴⁶ Jacqueline Trussell, "The Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship: Giving Baptists a Choice" (December 2002, accessed 17 December 2002); available from <http://blackandchristian.com/articles/academy/trussell-12-00.shtml>; Internet.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

Pentecostal approach to worship including speaking in tongues and laying on of hands and (2) a structural institution that many Baptists do not support. The introduction of bishops, elders and other denominational titles into the African American Baptist Church threatens Baptist polity, which adheres to the autonomous nature of the church.

The black Baptists of the United States would lead efforts in the Civil Rights movement through such representatives as Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson, and many others. From the infancy of the National Baptist Convention blacks have stood for freedom of worship and oppression, yet they have failed to see the oppression of their own black women. Why would such heroes of freedom and justice embrace the hierarchical structure of oppression that had been embraced by the white masters that they sought freedom from? One area that may have influenced the embrace is the effect of fundamentalism on the black Baptist church.

Influence of Fundamentalism on the National Baptist Convention

Fundamentalism has influenced the black Baptist church in three ways: (1) a connection with and accommodation to the fundamentalist white churches within denominations (2) an educational system that has been influenced by fundamentalism, and (3) an otherworldly view that is in line with fundamentalism.

To begin a discussion of the effect of fundamentalism on the subjugation of women in the black church, we need to understand what is fundamentalism. While the fundamentalist hold to common beliefs with other Christians, it is the literal interpretation

of the Bible that most effects the subjugation of the women.²⁴⁸ More precisely, it is the interpretation of the Bible by fundamentalists as the inerrant word of God that has been a rallying point to keep women “in their place.” Albert G. Miller states, “More precisely, fundamentalists, drawing from the conservative Princeton Seminary theologians, asserted that the Bible was “inerrant,” meaning that the Bible, “when correctly interpreted, is ‘truthful,’ regardless of the topic it broaches, whether in the area of doctrine, creed, ethics, or history and the natural world.”²⁴⁹ The problem with the view of some fundamentalists concerning the inerrancy of the Bible is that they believe that they have “the correct” interpretation. The concept of having “the correct” interpretation became evident as the fundamentalist movement grew and developed into two different streams: evangelical and fundamentalist. Miller states:

The split formed around the emerging 1940s moderate coalition of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) which arose with the ministry of Billy Graham. Fundamentalists wanted to separate from and not be identified with mainline denominations. The NAE saw itself as conservative but willing to hold the middle ground between the fundamentalist and the liberals. Nancy Ammerman in her book, *Bible Believers; Fundamentalists in the Modern World*, suggested that the difference between the fundamentalists and their evangelical counterparts centered on the “dogmatism about the literal nature of scripture.” Fundamentalists are considerably more sure that every word of Scripture (often the King James Version) is to be taken at face value. Evangelicals are more comfortable with the ambiguities of translation and interpretation that arise when Scripture is subject to critical analysis.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Brenda E. Brasher, “Fundamentalism,” *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia* [book on-line] (October 15, 2002, accessed 5 November 2002); available from http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_fundamentalism; Internet.

²⁴⁹ Albert G. Miller, “The Construction of a Black Fundamentalist Worldview: The Role of Bible Schools” in *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Text and Social Textures*, ed. Vincent L. Winbush (New York, New York: Continuum International, 2000), 714.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

If the King James Version of the Bible is accepted as inerrant, then slavery as well as the subjugation of women is the only option. I believe in the word of God, but I believe that there needs to be investigation to arrive at what God is communicating to us. At the very least, we cannot accept an English translation of the Bible (King James Version), which was written in Greek and Hebrew, as the inerrant word of God.

The first area in this section of the paper that I would like to address is the connection with the white church. While the black church had come from a different cultural location than their counterpart in the white church, there were connections between the black and white churches within denominations.²⁵¹ Black and White Baptists had connections with each other. Where there were connections, the connections favored the one and subjugated the other.²⁵² While appropriating some of the doctrinal and liturgical norms associated with the white church, the black church had their own "canon within a canon," that would not accept blindly the fundamentalism of the White church. Yet some black churches embraced the concept of the subjugation of women, which was consistent with the white fundamentalism.

But why would the Black church appropriate some of fundamentalism and shun parts of it. They appropriated the scriptures that called for women to keep silent and rejected those that called for slaves to obey their masters. Therefore the connection with white churches is not reason enough to explain the black churches accommodation of fundamentalism. Albert G. Miller is quoted as saying, "But this connection alone does

²⁵¹ Ibid., 713.

²⁵² Ibid.

not explain the appropriation of conservative biblical theology in some black churches.”²⁵³

The educational system that has trained many blacks was influenced by fundamentalism. Albert G. Miller is quoted as stating:

A major component of the construction of a black fundamentalist worldview is the development of Bible schools in the African American community. These schools were crucial in the development of the larger black fundamentalist movement. Bible schools were also significant in the development of fundamentalist doctrines in the larger pre- and post-World War II, black community as well.²⁵⁴

Prior to the introduction of these Bible schools that taught fundamentalism, African Americans had developed an oral tradition of telling and retelling the biblical faith story.²⁵⁵ Fundamentalism infected the leadership of the black church through education in the fundamentalist Bible schools. Consequently, they passed on the concepts of fundamentalism to their congregations. It is this infection that the black church is faced with as they struggle to allow women to move into the positions that God has called many of them to.

The last area that I would like to investigate is the otherworldly view that has caused many blacks to not address issues that are before them and to become an apolitical church. Looking at the end times and what we can expect to see in heaven helped to serve our fore-parents. Even now, our plight causes us to look to a better day when God will sit in judgment over the unjust, and we will rest from our labors and pain. To stay, however,

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 718.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

focused on that otherworldly view while your sisters and brothers languish in subjugation and pain does not contribute to the growth and edification of the church family and the human family. The question of how involved the church should be in society comes into question. Metaphorically, I believe we must feed the 5,000 before we can tell them about salvation in Jesus. We must serve socially and spiritually.

The fundamentalist view of women as “lesser than” has been appropriated by many in the Black church. It is disturbing when you stop and think that the majority of those that call themselves fundamentalist are white. A survey conducted by the Civil Rights Activists indicated, “97% of the fundamentalists are white and 62 % are male.”²⁵⁶

Through our doctrine, schools and beliefs, we have appropriated from a cultural system that enslaved our people with minimal scrutiny. Placed under the microscope of scrutiny, fundamentalism is exposed as a limiting factor to the liberation of black women in the black church. We must strive to examine those doctrines; written and unwritten, in the black church that have appropriated fundamentalism and determine what applies and what does not.

An example of how fundamentalism influenced the NBC can be found in Lincoln and Mamiya. The authors state:

In the earliest Separate Baptist churches of the South, women were ordained as deaconesses, and some unordained women were allowed to preach. As the Baptist faith spread during the First Great Awakening in the mid-eighteenth century, there was a “remarkable freedom of participation by women.” Black women found room for expression, involvement and leadership in Baptist churches. Women were given formal roles as deaconesses and served on committees to work with and even attended meetings of the American Baptist Convention in the North. However, it was in 1800 when the Separate and Regular Baptists merged that freedom

²⁵⁶ “What Is Christian Fundamentalism?” (accessed 5 November 2002); available from <http://www.geocities.com/glnaz2001/Fundamentalism.htm>; Internet.

became far more restricted, and eventually, in both black and white churches leadership became almost exclusively male.²⁵⁷

Just as the merging of the Regular Baptists with the Separatists Baptist caused a negative change in the involvement of the women in the Convention, so the fundamentalist influence upon the NBC has helped to support the view that women should not be preachers.

The strong Black women in the NBC persevered in spite of the oppressive actions of the male dominated convention. In the next section of the paper I will review some of the contributions of the women of the NBC.

Contributions of Some Women of the National Baptist Convention

The contributions of many women of the NBC may never be known, because the autonomy of the churches kept the contributions within the boundaries of the local church. Lincoln and Mamiya state, "The complete history of black preaching women among the Baptists is undocumented and difficult to trace because the independent church policy of the Baptists ensures the autonomy of each congregation in matters of faith and practice."²⁵⁸ The talents of many women came to the fore in spite of the written or unwritten rules of subjugation for women. While this section of the paper will review significant contributions of many women that have been associated with the NBC, I cannot help but think that many gifts that should have been shared never were.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 287.

²⁵⁸ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church*, 286-287.

The most significant venues for the gifts of the women of the NBC, U.S.A., Inc. to be displayed have been in the areas of mission work and in the Women's Auxiliary of the NBC Concerning the activity of the Women's Convention of the National Baptist Convention, Higgenbotham states:

In 1900 women succeeded in forming an alternative sphere of deliberation within the larger denominational context of the National Baptist Convention. The Women's Convention, defined as an auxiliary to the NBC, summoned a sisterhood more than one million strong and culminated nearly three decades of work by women's organizations at the local and state levels. Through their convention, black women shared knowledge of their state and local activities. They governed their own members, initiated their own agenda, elected their own leaders, and developed criteria that won respect and emulation from other women.²⁵⁹

In this section of the paper, I will review the contributions of Nannie Helen Burroughs and Virginia Broughton as examples of the contributions that black women have made to the NBC U.S.A., Inc. churches. I will then, review some of the contributions that black women have made to the mission field. I begin by reviewing the contributions of Nannie Helen Burroughs.

It was at the Annual Convention of the National Baptist Convention in 1900 that a twenty-one-year-old Nannie Helen Burroughs delivered her speech entitled, "How the Sisters are Hindered from Helping."²⁶⁰ Higgenbotham in her book, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* states, "Burroughs proclaimed that there was a long standing "righteous discontent" on the part of black Baptist women and prophesied that they would play a dynamic role in the years

²⁵⁹ Evelyn Brooks Higgenbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 8.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

ahead.”²⁶¹ Her speech, in the Richmond meeting, helped launch the Women’s Convention (WC), Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention.²⁶²

Nannie Helen Burroughs was born in Orange, Virginia on May 2, 1879.²⁶³ After her father died, Burroughs and her mother moved to Washington D.C., where excelled in academics and graduated with honors from the M Street School in 1896.²⁶⁴ Miss Burroughs was active in the National Baptist Convention, serving as a bookkeeper and editorial secretary of the Foreign Mission Board.²⁶⁵

Under Nannie Helen Burroughs direction, the National Training School for Women and Girls opened at 50th and Grant Streets, NE, in Washington D.C. on October 19, 1909.²⁶⁶ Students came from across the United States and the Caribbean to attend the school.²⁶⁷ The school operated until the death of Burroughs in 1961.²⁶⁸

After examining who Nannie Helen Burroughs was, the question of why she stood up against the National Baptist Convention needs to be addressed. She could stand up, because she was not alone in her stand. Burroughs’ speech was not a solitary voice that spoke in 1900. Instead, it was a voice of many that had been fighting to be heard

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Kamil Barker, “The Pursuit of Liberty: Parallels Between Women’s Suffrage and the Emancipation of the Negro,” [book on-line] (accessed 14 January 2003); available from <http://www.gwu.edu/e73afream/kb-cg-am.html>; Internet.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

since the 1880's. Burroughs' speech was the culmination of the efforts of many women across the country that had started state conventions and had stood up to the oppression of the males dominated Baptist Conventions.

When the NBC was formed in 1895, the women had been forming their own state organizations since the early 1880's.²⁶⁹ By the time the first meeting of the women's state conventions occurred in Louisiana in 1890, conventions had been formed in Alabama, Kentucky, and Arkansas.²⁷⁰ All of the black women's conventions promoted schools and black-controlled educational work.

It was women like Virginia Broughton that had stood up to the oppressive behavior of many in the conventions. It was the custom of some conventions to have separate seating for the men and women. Not only were women and men separate in conventions but, women were not permitted to be a part of the business meetings of some churches.²⁷¹ To expound upon the issue of the oppression of women, Charles Octavius Booth, a black Baptist minister in Alabama, states, "In the early years of freedom women were not allowed to pray in public."²⁷²

Black women used the Bible to argued against the double standards that existed in many of the black Baptist churches. From *Righteous Discontent*, Higgenbotham lists a quote by Maria Stewart to reveal how women resisted the state that some men tried to subjugate them to. Maria Stewart writes, "What if I am a women; is not the God of ancient times the God of these modern days; Did he not raise up Deborah, to be a mother

²⁶⁹ Higgenbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, 58.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 120.

²⁷² Ibid.

and a judge in Israel [Judges 4:4]? Did not queen Esther save the lives of the Jews? And Mary Magdalene first declare the resurrection of Christ from the dead?"²⁷³

There is considerable doubt as to whether the male representatives of the National Baptist Convention spoke for all of the members of the convention. The doubt is substantiated in the fact that three women members of the male-dominated National Baptist Convention stood up for women's rights were. They were Virginia Broughton, Mary Cook and Lucy Wilmot Smith.²⁷⁴ Broughton, Cook and Smith were active in organizing separate women's conventions.²⁷⁵ In this section of the paper, I focus on the life of Virginia Broughton.

Higgenbotham states, "All three women were born in the South during the last years of slavery, but Broughton's background was the most privileged. She described her father as an "industrious man" who hired out his time for his master and subsequently bought his wife's and his own freedom."²⁷⁶ Broughton was raised as a free black. She graduated from Fisk University in 1875. She was married to a lawyer, John Broughton. Virginia Broughton worked as a teacher and a full-time missionary.²⁷⁷ In 1885, she won, what would be called, a discrimination case when she claimed that a less experienced black male teacher was hired over her.²⁷⁸ She was a woman ahead of her time.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 124.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

Her outspoken nature was evident when she gave her interpretation of the Genesis story of creation. Broughton stressed the fact that Adam was formed from a crude lump of clay, but not Eve.²⁷⁹ Higgenbotham reports, "She reminded her readers that God purposely sprang Eve from a bone, located on Adam's side and under his heart, for woman to be man's companion and helpmate, and she noted that God took the bone neither from Adam's head for woman to reign over him, nor from his foot for man to stand over her."²⁸⁰

The contributions of women to the Women's Convention of the NBC was considerable, but so were their contributions in the area of mission. The contributions of women to mission were significant in the NBC I end this section of the paper with a review of some of the many black women that served on the mission field. I will briefly discuss the work of three black women missionaries, Miss Louise C. Fleming, Miss E. B. Delaney and Mrs. Lucinda Thomas.

The same conventions that the women had to fight to be heard in, recognized their ability on the mission field.²⁸¹ Women formed missionary societies. The first of which were to support mission work in Africa.

The first woman to be discussed is Miss Louise C. Fleming. The Women's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society of the West was organized in Chicago in 1871.²⁸² Fitts states, "This organization reflected the growing awareness, on the part of black women, of their

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 128.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists*, 121.

²⁸² Ibid.

potentials for missions. Miss Louise C. Fleming was the first black woman missionary from America to be sent to Congo, Africa.”²⁸³

Rev. William J. Simmons, president of State University, Louisville, Kentucky encourage black Baptist women to organize foreign mission programs. As a result, the black Baptist women of Kentucky organized “The Baptist Women’s Educational Convention of the State of Kentucky.”²⁸⁴ After Kentucky formed the first state missionary program, other states quickly followed. Soon there were women’s missionary programs in Alabama, Arkansas, and Georgia.

The next black woman to be recognized in this chapter is Miss E. B. Delaney. The Foreign Mission Board of the NBC sent Miss Delaney to East Central Africa in 1901.²⁸⁵ After serving in East Central Africa for five years, she returned to the United States in 1905. Upon returning to the United States, E. B. Delaney discovered that an African boy by the name of Daniel Malekebu made his way through more than 250 miles of the jungle in order to follow her to America.²⁸⁶ This act impressed Miss Delaney, and she encouraged Daniel Malekebu to enter Meharry Medical School in Nashville, Tennessee.²⁸⁷ Daniel Malekebu became a doctor and married Flora Zeto of the Belgian Congo, who was a graduate of Spelman.²⁸⁸ They returned to Africa to advance the cause

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 124.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.,.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

of Christian missions.²⁸⁹ Miss Delaney returned to the mission field in 1912 to Liberia. There, she founded the Suehn Industrial Mission of Liberia, West Africa and labored until her death in 1920.²⁹⁰

The last Black woman missionary to be recognized, specifically, in this chapter is Mrs. Lucinda Thomas East. She was a pioneer in African missions and the wife of Rev. James E. East.²⁹¹ She supported mission work for over 50 years.²⁹² With her husband, she served eleven years in South Africa under the Foreign Mission Board of the NBC.²⁹³ In 1921 Rev. East was elected corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the NBC, U.S.A., Inc.²⁹⁴ Even though the East family settled in Philadelphia, Mrs. Lucinda Thomas East's love for Africa did not cease. She was instrumental in inspiring her daughter, Gladys East to continue the family tradition of foreign mission work.²⁹⁵

In this chapter, I have showcased a few of the many women that have served the NBC and society, as a whole, with distinction. The contributions of the women, listed above, is a part of history. However, the contributions of many have not graced a history book. They have given without being recognized. Not only have many women not been recognized, but they have also been relegated to obscurity and silence.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 127.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

The last area of this foundation paper to be covered is the issue of women preachers in history. These women preachers are not listed in the Bible.

History of Women Preachers

Along with the early church's desire to silence the powerful voices of women and to conform with the prevailing hierarchical norms of the Greco-Roman world was a desire to distance itself from sects that it deemed either schematic or heretical. The Montanists were a sect that the church sought to distance itself from. As stated earlier Elizabeth A. Clark writes:

Catholic Christianity's wish to distinguish itself from sects that it deemed either schismatic or heretical provided another reason for church authorities to limit women's roles, since some of these sects permitted higher positions of leadership to women. Two women prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla, were hailed by Montanists as among their founders and were said to enjoy direct revelations of the Holy Spirit (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 8.12; Eusebius, *H.E.* 5.16). Montanist women may also have baptized and celebrated the eucharist (Cyprian, *Ep.* 75[74].10; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 49.2). And some Gnostic groups, according to the church fathers, allowed women to serve as priests and to baptize (Hippolytus, *Haer.* 6.35; Iranaeus, *Haer.* 1.12.1-2; Epiphanius, *Haer.* 42.4; Tertullian, *Praeser.* 41). Catholic women were thus told not to seek such offices.²⁹⁶

A noted preacher from inside and outside of the Bible was Mary Magdalene. She was one of the "many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him" (Matt. 27:55). Mary Magdalene was one of the women at Calvary who were "looking on from afar" (Mark 15:40) when Jesus died on the cross (John 19:25). She was at Joseph's tomb when the body of Jesus was wrapped in a fine linen cloth and a large stone was

²⁹⁶ Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women" in *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, Second Edition, Volume 2, 1182.

rolled against the door of the tomb (Matt. 27:61; Mark 15:47). And she was a witness of the risen Christ (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 20:1). In fact, she was the first of any of Jesus' followers to see Him after His resurrection (Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18).

We find another story of Mary Magdalene in a second century Gnostic gospel.

Karen Jo Torjesen states:

In the opening scene of the Gospel of Mary, a second-century Gnostic Gospel, Mary Magdalene rallies the despondent disciples after the ascension of their Lord. By exhortation, encouragement, and finally a rousing sermon on the teachings of Jesus, she revives their flagging spirits and sends them off on their mission. Because of her strong leadership role, she appears in some texts with the title Apostle of the Apostles."²⁹⁷

The Gospel of Mary was discovered in 1945 among a collection of manuscripts at Nag Hammadi in upper Egypt.²⁹⁸ The Gospel reveals Mary as a leader and Peter as her chief opponent.²⁹⁹ Many will not read or evaluate the book, because it is a Gnostic book.

A definition given for 'Gnosticism' in the *Westminster Dictionary of Christian*

Theology is as follows:

Gnosticism is the term used to describe a religious movement of the early Christian centuries which laid a special emphasis upon knowledge (Greek: gnosis) of God and of the nature and destiny of man. This knowledge of who we were or where we were placed, whither we hasten, from what we are redeemed, what birth is and what rebirth (Clem. Alex., *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 78.2), was believed to have redeeming power, liberating the soul from the sway of cosmic forces. The earliest information about this movement came from the work of Christian opponents (Irenaeus,

²⁹⁷ Torjesen, *When Women Were Priests*, 10.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Hippolytus, Epiphanius, Tertullian), who regarded it as a Christian heresy, and it was so treated down to the nineteenth century.³⁰⁰

There is physical evidence that somebody believed in the leadership of Mary Magdalene. I have included one painting depicting her talking to the disciples from the twelfth-century. Figure 2 is a painting entitled "The St. Alban Psalter". It was painted between 1120-1130. It was made, possibly, for Saint Christina of Markyate, and it depicts Mary Magdalene heralding the good news to eleven rather astonished apostles.³⁰¹



Figure 2. Mary Magdalene, apotolorum apotola, from Psalter of St. Albans (1120-30), Hildesheim: Dombibliothek, MS St. God, 1 (property of the Parish St. Godeherd Hildesheim); photo reproduced by permission of the Dombibilotheek, Hildesheim.³⁰²

In support of the information listed above, the University of San Diego theologian Gary Macy states:

For over 1,200 years the question of the validity of women's ordination remained at least an open question. Some popes, bishops and scholars accepted such ordinations as equal to those of men. There are abundant references to the ordination of *episcapae*

³⁰⁰ Alan Richardson and John Bowden, ed. *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology* 226.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 62-63.

³⁰² Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker, *Women Preachers and Prophets Through Two Millenia of Christianity* (Bereley, California: University of California Press, 1998), 62.

and *presbyterae* (women bishops and women priests), deaconesses and abbesses in Church documents form the earliest times. In those times, everyone agrees, the word “ordination” had a wider and more ambiguous meaning than it has today. And church officials have long declared that the term did not signify elevation to the clerical state or the right to confer sacraments. Episcopae and presbyterae, it was argued, were designations for the wives of male bishops and priests. But mounting evidence contradicts this.³⁰³

In the tenth-century women were ordained to help men in leading the worship and presiding over the church because there was a great need.³⁰⁴ Under a high arch in a Roman basilica is a ninth-century mosaic of four female figures.³⁰⁵ One of the figures has a carefully lettered inscription that identifies who she is.³⁰⁶ The face identified on the mosaic is Theodora Episcopa, which means Bishop Theodora.³⁰⁷

Macy states, “Other ninth-century documents provide explicit descriptions of liturgies in which women assisted.”³⁰⁸ Macy quotes one scholar: “It is certain that women could not have gained access to the altar without the acquiescence of the officiating bishop or priest. As for the people, they took bread and wine from the hands of women, so ordinary believers accepted the authority of certain women to administer the sacraments.”³⁰⁹

³⁰³ Gary Macy, “Women Priests Until 12th Century” (January-February, 2001, accessed 10 January 2003); available from <http://www.cta-usa.org/watch01-01/macy.html>; Internet.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁰⁵ Torjesen, *When Women Were Priests*, 10.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ Macy, “Women Priests,” 2.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

Torjesen states, "At a burial site on the Greek island of Thera there is an epitaph for an *Epiktas* names as a priest or presbyter (presbyteris). *Epiktas* is a woman's name; she was a woman priest sometime in the third or fourth century."³¹⁰

Documents from the 800's to the 1200's show a growing hostility to women's official ministry.³¹¹ In the twelfth century, the separation between the laity and minister widened as the power bestowed up the minister became essential to the ritual life of the community and salvation itself.³¹² Macy states, "Finally at the Council of Trent (1545-1563) the clerical exclusivity of males was set in stone."³¹³

Macy questions the decision of the Catholic Church to determine that some documents are accepted by the church while others are not. He asks, "Was this ordination and liturgical activity of women through most of the Church's history simply a mistake? And is the current, restricted understanding of ordination the only valid tradition for the Church?"³¹⁴ The magisterium has concluded that some periods of history and some documents are more normative, important, and irreversible than others.³¹⁵ Yet Macy finds that there is an absence of theological arguments to justify making some documents normative over others.³¹⁶

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

Thecla of Iconium was a pupil of the Apostle Paul, who is the heroin of the apocryphal “Acts of Paul and Thecla.” According to the narrative, Thecla was a virgin of Iconium who was led to dedicate herself to perpetual virginity by the preaching of the Apostle Paul. She is reported to have experienced miraculous deliveries when faced with death. With the consent of Paul, she had acted as a “female Apostle” in proclaiming the Gospel.³¹⁷ St. Thecla, a missionary associate of the Apostle Paul, was also known as an apostle.

Having reviewed the historical setting out of which 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 was written, the history of the NBC, Inc., and the history of women preaching that were not listed in the Bible, it is clear to me that there has been a precedent set for women preachers. This precedent has been denied by many in support of a hierarchical structure that elevates men over women in the church. This hierarchical structure comes from a place and time that was oppressive to women. Some, that support the subjugation of women, when it comes to preaching, have misapplied texts like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. They have attempted to apply a text for a specific time and place, universally.

Just as the second century church as recorded in the Pastorals sought to control the strong women prophets and widows, the black Baptist church has sought to control the strong women in the denomination. Many men and women have accepted the household codes of Socrates that have been passed on to fundamentalist beliefs regarding women.

It is time for the men and women of the NBC and other churches to embrace the gifts that God has given the church. If God has called a woman to preach, who should

³¹⁷ J. P. Kirsch, “New Advent,” *Catholic Encyclopedia* (K. Knight, November 4, 2004, accessed 15 December 2002); available from <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14564a.htm>; Internet.

deny them a venue to exercise their gift(s)? The church and the Black community need those gifts.

Theological Foundations

In section of the paper, we will (1) define theology, (2) address the differences that exist between the complementarians and the egalitarians concerning women preaching, (3) define feminist theology and hear from Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, a feminist, on her interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, (4) define womanist theology and hear from Clarice J. Martin, a womanist, on her interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 (5) hear from Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger on rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15, and (6) review what it means to be called to preach. We begin by defining what theology is.

What Is Theology?

Owen C. Thomas and Elken K. Wondra, in their book, *Introduction to Theology*, define theology in the following way.

In the classical approach still favored by many European and North American theologians, theology is the methodological investigation and interpretation of the content of Christian faith, the orderly clarification and explanation of what the Christian message affirms. From another angle, theology is an activity or function of the Christian church carried out by members of the church. It is faith seeking understanding, through which the church in every age reflects on the basis of its existence and the content of its message. From yet another angle, theology is "faith seeking the clarity of its cause." That is, it is a reflection on Christian life amid struggles for freedom or liberation, for the full humanity of all persons, and for the transformation of human persons and societies as manifestations of and in expectation of the reign of God.³¹⁸

³¹⁸ Owen C. Thomas and Elken K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology, Third Edition* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 1.

Thomas and Wondra differentiate between the classical approach to theology and two other approaches that are termed “another angle.” The other angles or approaches define theology as “faith seeking understanding” and “faith seeking the clarity of its cause.” The theology of a church helps to determine what is right and wrong for that church. Thomas and Wondra state, “Theology is normative in attempting to determine the true Christian faith—to distinguish true doctrine from false doctrine, true practice from false practice, true worship from false worship; to determine what is and is not part of the Christian faith.”³¹⁹

Seeking to determine what is right and wrong, often, has led the classical approach to theology to try to establish “one voice” as “the voice” for all people and all times. Seeking to understand the concept of “one voice,” One voice does not speak for all voices. One voice that dominates others and does not recognize the importance of other voices or opinions can become the leaven of understanding, when it is allowed to subjugate other voices.

Much of the classical or traditional understanding of text has relied upon “one” voice. That one voice is attributable to the dominant culture at the time. In *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism* Brian K. Blount states, “Even though sociolinguistics recognizes that people of different cultures interpret text and social events differently, it does not deal with the fact that the dominant culture too often presents only its interpretations as “correct” or “scientific.”³²⁰

³¹⁹ Ibid., 5.

³²⁰ Brian K. Blount, “A Contextual Approach to New Testament Interpretation” in *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1995), 16.

The non-classical theological approaches are grounded in reflecting upon the existence and content of the message of the church in every age, and they are shaped amid the struggle for freedom and liberation. The non-classical approaches to theology give a high degree of importance to the context of the church. Faith seeking understanding and faith seeking cause in every age and shaped by its struggles must consider the context in which it exists. Thomas and Wondra help to define the contextualization of theology when they state:

A major hallmark of late twentieth and early twenty-first-century theology has been its interest in exploring and presenting how particular socio-cultural and racial/ethnic groups experience the Christian faith, and how they express it. There is a growing appreciation that the Christian message is received, appropriated, and conveyed in terms that are apt to faith communities' particular circumstances and history, and to their relations with others, often dominant communities.³²¹

The non-classical voices need to be heard and contribute to a collective understanding of text. There is no "one" voice or understanding that is above all other voices that can stand alone, without being grounded in context. Voices from Asia, Africa, South America, as well as the voices from womanists, feminists, and others need to be heard.

Frederic C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe, in *Biblical Interpretation a Roadmap*, explain that there are basic assumptions underlying the process of reading scripture.³²² How we read scripture is based upon the writer's perspective and context as well as the reader's. Tiffany and Ringe list three basic assumptions that effect how we read scripture.

³²¹ Ibid., 6.

³²² Frederic C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe, *Biblical Interpretation a Roadmap* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1996), 14-16.

First among them is the recognition that the Bible is a collection of documents written by human authors for specific human communities struggling to understand and express their own identity in relationship with each other and God. That means that these documents are historically and culturally relative, and we must respect the specific social institutions and world-views that underlie them.

A second assumption, one that parallels the first, is that the perspective of every reader is also historically and culturally relative. All people are influenced by the place and time in which they live; by the economic, social, political and religious factors shaping their lives; and by the communities to whose wellbeing they are committed.

A third assumption is that while no reading can claim special privilege, neither does any reading function in isolation from other persons and communities. An important step in responsible interpretation is learning to be attentive to readings from many distinct persons and communities.³²³

The different readers are different voices that need to be heard. Instead of voices being thought of as separate entities that do not interact, the many voices should be understood as being different clothes that can be interwoven to yield a beautiful and strong cloth. Jesus says in Matthew 9:16, "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made."

Metaphorically, I see different theological voices as fabrics. Some are old, and there have been many tares inflicted upon the fabric. The new voices within denominations (old cloth) and outside of those denominations, threaten the traditional stability of the fabric. Voices such as womanists, feminists, African Americans, and Latinos question

³²³ Ibid.

what has been the norm. The question is can the old fabric stand up to the pressure exerted by the new patch, or will the old reject the imposition of the new cloth?

The concept of cloth is advanced in Elain M. Wainwright's article entitled, "Weaving A New Web of Creative Remembering." Wainwright implies that you cannot apply a new patch to old cloth when she states, "she 'casts her lot' with the women that seek to reconstitute the world, weaving a new future for humanity even from the broken web of the past".³²⁴ Wainwright's voice is that of a feminist that speaks out against "kyriarchy" (the rule of elite males).³²⁵

The new voices need space within ecclesia for expression. Mary Ann Tolbert in her article, "A New Teaching with Authority," highlights the "special hermeneutic" of authority taught by many ecclesiastical bodies.³²⁶ Tolbert states, "This special hermeneutic or doctrine of denominations has been employed most often to exclude certain groups of people, to pass judgment on various disapproved activities, and to justify morally or historically debatable positions."³²⁷ Ecclesiastical bodies claim that their special hermeneutic is the "official" one voice for those associated with that body, therefore, excluding many voices.³²⁸ This official voice as defined by Enrique Drussel as the "centrist" voice is a collective perspective that has been embraced by those who

³²⁴ Ferdinand F. Segoivia and Mary Ann Tolbert, ed., *Teaching the Bible: The Discourse and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 338.

³²⁵ Ibid., 339.

³²⁶ Ferdinand F. Segoivia and Mary Ann Tolbert, ed., *Teaching the Bible: The Discourse and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 169.

³²⁷ Ibid., 171.

³²⁸ Brian K. Blount, *Cultural Interpretation; Reorienting New Testament Criticism* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 1995), 17.

maintain political and numerical superiority.³²⁹ What happens to those that are on the exterior, far from the centrist viewpoint? How are the “exterior” voices to be heard if the “official” one suppresses them?

Complimentarianism and Egalitarianism

The next section of the paper addresses the two main theological positions prevalent today regarding women preachers: (1) complimentarianism and (2) egalitarianism. We begin by examining complimentarianism.

Beck and Blomberg define Complimentarians as those who favor certain timeless restrictions on women’s roles in the church.³³⁰ In the past, the complimentarians would have been labeled “hierarchicalists” or “traditionalists.”³³¹ On the surface, they tend to base their opinion of limiting the role of women preachers, in the church, based on their interpretation of scripture like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12. The position of the complimentarian is the traditionally accepted understanding within historic Judaism and Christianity.³³² Doug V. Heck states, “Basically, this view suggests that God has established a functional hierarchy in the home and church. The male is to lead and the female is to follow, with the implications in the ministry of the local church, to limit women to non-leadership positions.”³³³ This position would be the same position

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg, *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: 2001), 16.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Doug V. Heck, “The Philosophy of Women’s Ministry in the Local Church”(1987, accessed 30 December 2003); available from <http://www.grace4u.org/topical/WomeninMinistry.htm>: Internet.

³³³ Ibid.

held by the Southern Baptist, as mentioned above. The term complinertarian is a new term. In the past a complimentarian may have been called a fundamentalist.

Fundamentalism grew in response to the growth of "liberal Protestantism" that was a product of the Enlightenment.³³⁴ The term fundamentalist became associated with a loose coalition of conservatives from many denominations, which was formed to fight liberalism.³³⁵ As liberalism threatened the conservatives, fundamentalism came to threaten many Protestants, and men like Harry Fosdick and H. L. Mencken spoke out against it.³³⁶ Fosdick preached a sermon entitled, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win!," while Mencken referred to the fundamentalists as "Neanderthals."³³⁷

The theology of fundamentalism is composed of four basic thoughts, (1) the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible, (2) a belief in dispensationalism and premillenniaalism, (3) revivalism and (4) deeper life movement.³³⁸

George Dollar believes that there is an element of militantism in the fundamentalist. He states, "Historical fundamentalism is the literal exposition of all the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-Biblical affirmations and attitudes."³³⁹ Dollar believes that the fundamentalist must be militant in

³³⁴ Fisher Humphreys, *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology has Changed and What it Means to Us All* (New York, New York: McCracken Press, 1994), 105.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid., 106-107.

³³⁹ George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, n.d.). The definition appears in large, bold type on an unnumbered page before the text of the book begins in Fisher Humphreys, *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology has Changed and What it Means to Us All* (New York, New York: McCracken Press, 1994), 108.

their opposition to anyone that opposes teachings contrary to the Bible.³⁴⁰ The problem of teaching the Bible lies in the fact that every person does not interpret the Bible in the same way.

One of the basic beliefs of the fundamentalist is that the Bible is inerrant or unerring. Fundamentalists will acknowledge that some errors may exist in the texts and translations of the Bible, but they argue that the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts were without error.³⁴¹ Some fundamentalists may have a problem with understanding that the original manuscripts are the text that are inerrant. Humpreys states, "The new technical vocabulary of inerrancy of the autographs is not found in the Baptist Faith Message (I). That document affirms that the Bible has "God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter."³⁴²

On the other side of the debate with the complementarians are the egalitarians. Beck and Blomberg describe the egalitarians as those who believe that there are no biblical mandated timeless distinctions between men and women in the church.³⁴³ There is an emphasis on mutual submission.³⁴⁴ There are varying egalitarian positions from claiming that the Bible is of no significance when it comes to constructing a contemporary philosophy of the role of women in ministry, to seeing the seeds of cultural liberation for women within Christianity and moving away from hierarchical

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Ibid, 110.

³⁴² Ibid, 112.

³⁴³ Beck and Blomberg, *Two Views of Women in Ministry*, 16.

³⁴⁴ Heck, "The Philosophy of Women's Ministry in the Local Church," 2.

domination.³⁴⁵ The egalitarian holds to an authoritative interpretation of the Bible but challenges the historical hierarchical tradition of interpretation.³⁴⁶

After gaining an understanding of the two main theological positions regarding women preachers, we turn our attention to defining feminist and womanist theology. I am a man, and hence, cannot understand what women feel concerning issues that pertain to and effect women preachers. Therefore, I present the positions of some women regarding 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 that has been used to limit the contributions of women in the black Baptist church. We begin by defining feminist theology.

Feminist Theology

Feminist theology is focused in the context of women's experiences and struggles in the church and society.³⁴⁷ Jacquelyn Grant, in *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus*, states "The feminist theologies which I examine regard human experiences in general and women's experiences in particular as primary sources for doing theology."³⁴⁸ While there are several feminist theologies, Grant states:

Christian feminist tend to agree upon the following: (1) Even when experience has been considered a source for theology it has actually invoked an abstract experience or it has spoken of it as if human experience equaled a "phantom" universal male

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), 3.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

experience.³⁴⁹ (2) The use of the Bible in much of the White, male-articulated theologies has reinforced the oppression of women; and (3) Appeals to tradition in mainstream male articulated theologies often have been nothing more than a way of reinforcing male patriarchal history. Women, it is agreed, need liberation from all of these oppressive uses of sources and must develop alternative sources and/or interpretations of sources.

Does feminist theology speak for all women? In essence, do different women have different experiences? Grant states, "Although feminist theology has been made an important critique of the sexist limitations of the dominant theologies of Europe and North America, it is not without serious limitations, especially when evaluated in the light of Black women's experience. The next section of the paper, after a presentation of an evaluation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 by Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, will focus on womanist theology, which is grounded in the Black woman's experience.

As an example of a feminist perspective on scripture regarding women preachers, this section of the paper reflects on an interpretation that Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza has of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. Fiorenza is a feminist. It is critical to hear from women in evaluating 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 concerning the issue of women preachers.

Concerning a feminist critique of patriarchy, Clarice J. Martin writes, "Feminist critique of patriarchy and androcentrism constitutes a radical call for the church to take seriously its agency as a vehicle through which God can achieve the full humanity of all

³⁴⁹ According to Rita Gross, this is experience interpreted androcentrically: the male experience becomes synonymous with human experience. "... in androcentric thinking, the male norm and the human norm are collapsed and become identical." See "Androcentrism and Androgyny in the Methodology of History of Religion," in *Beyond Androcentrism: New Essays on Women and Religion*, ed. Rita Gross (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977), p. 9. Paul Tillich speaks of experience as "the medium" through which the sources 'speak' to us." See *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1956), Chapter I in Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1989), 3.

persons.”³⁵⁰ Elisabeth Schusler Fiorenza believes that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. In an article entitled “Women, Text and Canon: The Strange Case of 1 Corinthians 14:33-35,” Winsome Munro states, “Fiorenza, while convincingly reconstructing the discipleship of equals characterized in the Jesus movement which began as a reform movement within Judaism, continues her polemic begun earlier against those who ‘would justify Paul at any cost’ against the charge of male chauvinism and present him as a liberationist.”³⁵¹ Fiorenza does not excuse Paul so quickly from responsibility when it comes to chauvinism. While Fiorenza accepts that the post Pauline texts are shaped by patriarchal influences, she excludes any suspicion that the writings ascribed to Paul could have undergone reshaping after they were first written.³⁵² She does see some evidence of Paul’s egalitarianism in his attempts to open up liberating possibilities for women and in his teaching in scriptures like Galatians 3:28, but she attributes those actions to a carry over from the teachings of Jesus.³⁵³

Fiorenza considers 1 Corinthians 14:33-36 to be an effort by Paul to protect the church. Munro states, “Following to some extent, others like the pre-Christian Mary Daly, Fiorenza considers Paul to be concerned not with limiting prophetic and ecstatic utterance but with protecting the church through church order.”³⁵⁴ She feels that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is consistent with the rest of 1 Corinthians 14 in which similar

³⁵⁰ Martin, “The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation,” 222.

³⁵¹ Winsome Munro, “Women, Text and Canon: The Strange Case of 1 Corinthians 14:33-35” in *A Journal of Bible and Theology: Biblical Theology Bulletin*, Vol.XVII, Number 1, January, 1987, 28.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

structured rules are given for glossolalists, prophets, and wives. Munro takes exception to Fiorenza's categorizing the glossolalists and prophets with the wives. The latter being more consistent with the "household codes."³⁵⁵ Fiorenza explains the apparent inconsistency by claiming that Paul differentiates between "holy" celibate women and wives in 1 Corinthians 14. The "holy" celibate women were allowed to express their spiritual gifts, whereas married women were more restricted.³⁵⁶

Paul's restricting of the married women in Corinth would lend credence to Fiorenza's claim that he should not be dismissed so quickly from the status of chauvinist. Concerning Fiorenza, Munro states, "Paul, she thinks, recognized women leaders who were independent of himself, including married ones, only because he was obliged to do so, and is to be held responsible for beginning the patriarchalization of an originally egalitarian movement."³⁵⁷

Winsome Munro disagrees with Fiorenza. He states, "But it is questionable that 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 could have been the beginning of a development that led eventually to the acceptance of the hierarchical ordering of the household set out in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Colossians 3:18-4:1 and 1 Peter 3:1-7, epistles Fiorenza accepts as post-Pauline. It is in fact more probable that church order silencing women was a development from the so-called "household codes" than the other way around."³⁵⁸ Munro considers 1 Corinthians

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 29.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

14:33-35 to be an anomaly to 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, and that it fits more appropriately in the pastorals.³⁵⁹

Whether 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 is Pauline or post-Pauline both Munro and Fiorenza agree that the text is a part of a political power struggle against earlier egalitarianism.³⁶⁰ Fiorenza places the beginnings of the struggle in the mission of Paul, whereas Munro places it in the catholic or universalizing tendency of the pastorals.³⁶¹ Having heard a feminist interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, we now, turn to Clarice J. Martin to hear a womanist perspective on the text.

Womanist Theology

In this section of the paper, I will review an article by Clarice J. Martin entitled, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women'".³⁶² We begin the discussion of this section of the paper by defining what womanist theology is. Following is the definition of "womanist" that Clarice J. Martin provides:

A womanist is a black feminist (of feminist of color) who claims her roots in black history, religion, and culture. Informed by biblical, theological, ecclesiastical, anthropological, and economic sources (among others), womanist theology searches in particular for the voices, actions, opinions, experiences, and faith of black women. Womanist theologians take seriously the socio-historical context in which black women have found themselves as moral agents, using this context as an operative form for feminist reflection. A womanist reflection on the hermeneutical paradoxes

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation," 206.

issues, and tensions in the slave-woman regulation in the Haustafeln, then, takes seriously the need to create and implement responsible ethical guidelines for the dismantling of the gender hierarchy of African American men and women.³⁶³

Womanist theology is based on the unique experiences of Black women in the African American context. Stephanie Y. Mitchem, in *Womanist Theology*, states, “Womanist theology starts with analysis of roles assigned to African American women by their families and the dominant culture, the persistent stereotypes about black women, the combination of race with gender, and recognition of diversity among women.”³⁶⁴

Alice Walker coined the term, “womanist” in her book, *In Search of Our Mother’s Gardens*. Mitchem states:

The definition incorporates the language of rhythms and meanings of black women. Walker states that the word “womanist” is a derivation of “womanish, which comes from the black folk expression, ‘You acting womanish.’” Walker includes the historical and communal dimensions of black women, indicating a history of women leading the enslaved to freedom, and stating that a womanist is “committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female.”³⁶⁵

From a womanist perspective, the Haustafeln model of male-master/subordinates would be changed to a more egalitarian model of God/female/male as shown below. Illustration 1 is a graphical depiction of the Haustafeln code that was a part of the Greco-

³⁶³ Ibid., 228.

³⁶⁴ Stephanie Y. Mitchem, *Womanist Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), p. 23.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 55.

Roman culture of the first and second century. Illustration 2 shows a more egalitarian model of the male/female relationship.

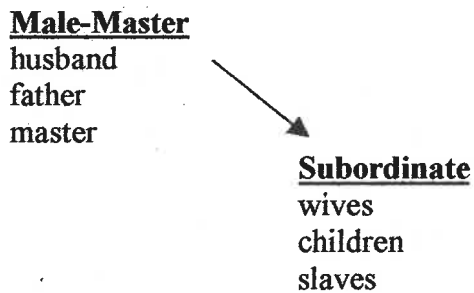


Illustration 1³⁶⁶

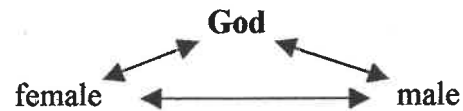


Illustration 2³⁶⁷

There are two reasons given by Martin as to why African Americans are not as accepting of the liberation of women as they are to the liberation of all black people, in general. The first reason given is African Americans have exhibited an understanding of liberation for African Americans, in general.³⁶⁸ That same understanding of liberation has not extended to the black woman. Martin states:

The point I make here is that whereas the legitimacy of the slave regulation in the *Haustafeln* could be challenged rather handily based on explicit paradigms about liberation from slavery in such narratives as Exodus 14, biblical narrative does not contain an equally explicit and consistent paradigm about the liberation of women from patriarchy, androcentrism, and misogyny.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 208.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 229.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 226.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 227.

The second reason cited by Martin is that many African Americans have accepted, uncritically, the patriarchal model of male control and supremacy in the Haustafeln that typifies the Euro-centric, Western, Protestant tradition in general.

Martin states that African American biblical interpreters must develop a liberationist hermeneutic regarding women and the women's place in ecclesiastical arenas and hierarchies.³⁷⁰ A hermeneutic should be developed based on Galatians 3:28-29 instead of scripture like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. The scriptures that support the subordination of women should not be taken as prescriptive for our culture today. According to Jewett, "Paul went all the way in living out the truth that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek," but Paul only began to work this out for slaves and free, male and female. His limitations here should not restrict us: it is high time that the church press on to the full implementation of the apostle's vision concerning the equality of the sexes in Christ."³⁷¹

Martin believes that black males and females should assume an advocacy position regarding the liberation of women at every level of ecclesiastical governance.³⁷² She cites Jareena Lee as an example of a woman that followed the liberating biblical tradition of Joel 2:28-29.

The next section of the paper addresses the issue of answering the call.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 228.

³⁷¹ Ibid., 229.

³⁷² Ibid., 230.

Answering the Call to Preach

In this section of the paper, I will review the call to ministry and how a person must answer that call. Recalling the definition of theology being “faith seeking understanding” and “faith seeking the clarity of its cause,” I find that the seeking of understanding of one’s faith in light of the call to preach is theological. Should a woman answer God’s call or be dissuaded by a hierarchical structure within church polity that says that a woman can’t preach. This section of the paper will also address the testimonies of two women preachers that were called to preach, but were prohibited from serving in the church where they acknowledged their call. One left the Baptist church, whereas the other one stayed.

Prior to my being convinced that women can preach, I was perplexed over the notion that people could tell other people whether they were called to preach or not. The “calling” comes from God. Everett C. Goodwin states, “In the same way that a regenerate heart is required for true membership in the church, a minister must experience something that can only be properly described as a divine call to that service: One does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was (Hebrews 5:4).”³⁷³ God calls preachers. Those who are called exhibit a deep conviction in their service. To be called is the first qualification of ministry.³⁷⁴ Everett C. Goodwin states, “A minister ultimately derives his or her authority from that same source (the

³⁷³ Everett C. Goodwin, *The New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Judson Press, 1995), 53.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

calling), and not on the basis of education, approval by church council, state authority, or any other external means.”³⁷⁵

Why, then, should so many people be spending so much time trying to stop women from preaching. Instead, we should take the wise council of Gamaliel from Acts 5:38-39, where he states, “And now I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.”

If a women is called by God, why would she refuse to answer the call? A call from God on a person’s life produces an effect on that person. Jeremiah described it as being “like a fire shut up in his bones” (Jeremiah 20:9). Larry D. George, in his article “‘Something You Just cannot Shake’: The Culture of the Call to Ordained Ministry for Women in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. and the African Methodist Episcopal Church Traditions” terms the call as “Something You Just Cannot Shake.”³⁷⁶ If her call is of God, the evidence of the presence of God will be manifested in her service. George states:

The Christian call to the Gospel preaching and teaching ministry emerges from and quite of an indescribable impulse, indescribable at first to the one being called and being beckoned to an almost inconceivable, unrecognizable urge to do God’s business in a hostile, socio-religious context. This divine prodding relays an inner urge that is nearly impossible to overcome because it is an inner phenomenon, unlike the common cold or heartbreak that lasts or runs its course relatively within a brief period, depending on a person’s immune system of ability to rebound from a lost love. No matter how one seeks to escape, this call is inescapable,

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Larry D. George, “‘Something You Just Cannot Shake’: The Culture of the Call to Ordained Ministry for Women in the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. and the African Methodist Episcopal Church Traditions,” in *The A.M.E. Church Review: Continuing a Tradition of Religious and Scholarly Excellence Since 1884*, Vol. CXVIII, October-December 2002, No. 388, ed. Sarah E. Tanner by Henry O. Tanner (Nashville, Tennessee), 102-108.

unavoidable, and difficult to pass off. In short, this experience like one of cupid's arrows cannot be easily shaken, nor can one escape from it, or seek to drown it out by abusing or misusing some sort of alcohol or drug or substance. In a sense, this inner struggle will result in a spiritual expertise that either will make one whole or it will cause, if avoided, in the end, self-destruction, purposelessness and aimlessness.³⁷⁷

No one should ever be expected to walk away from what God has called them to do. It is a requirement of them to obey God. Peter and the other disciples in Acts 5:29 answered the Sanhedrin council and said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." If a man or a woman has been called to preach, then they are to answer that call.

Concerning the issue of women preachers, I interviewed two black women preachers in Columbus, Ohio that had acknowledged a call to ministry and then were not recognized as ministers in the church in which they acknowledged their call. One woman decided to leave the church; the other decided to stay in the church in which she had acknowledged her call. The woman that left is Reverend Sarah Clark. The woman that stayed is Reverend Catherine Ross. We begin this section of the paper with the interview Reverend Sarah Clark.

Rev. Sarah Clark is an evangelist and a preacher. She is Apostolic. However, she started out as a Baptist. Because the church that she was attending when she received her call would not recognize her as a minister, she left that church. Rev. Clark does not appear to be bitter about leaving Mount Olivett Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio. It is the church where she was raised, and her mother and father served as deaconess and

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 2.

deacon. Rev. Clark was very active in the Baptist church. One of the ministries that she enjoyed the most was working with the youth.

Rev. Clark talks to the Holy Spirit. She was instructed to take off her make-up and wear white in the '70's. It was for her growth and development. She was not well received by the Mt. Olivett Baptist church as a result of the outward changes that she implemented in her life.

The Baptist church had one set program. They were not high on praise, clapping hands, or shouting much in the 70's and 80's. The implication in telling me that was that she did not fit the norm of the Baptist church.

Rev. Clark was conducting Bible study in her home when she received her call to preach. She did not want to be a preacher, but she answered her call after she had an extended illness.

The pastor of Mt. Olivett wanted her to stop her Bible study at home and attend the Wednesday night Bible study at the church. She left the church and continued to have Bible study at her home. The Lord blessed the Bible study, and it has continued for twelve years. Many people have come from out of town to be a part of the Bible study at Rev. Clark's home. Lay people, elders, prophetesses, teachers, bishops, and pastors have participated in the discussion, teaching, and praise at her residence.

Although Rev. Clark was ordained by the Apostolic Church, she is quick to state that "ordination doesn't make you a preacher." She states, "Either you answer the call or you die." She also stated, "The muzzle doesn't fit." As I talked with Rev. Clark I was wishing some men that doubt that God can call women were there to hear her testimony.

When I asked her what she thought was the reason why some churches do not believe in women preachers, she replied that the reasons are because of (1) tradition, (2) ignorance, and (3) doctrine. She said that God used women from the beginning. She cited Genesis 3:15 as a confrontation between Eve and Satan. Rev. Clark expressed that the rejection, persecution, and mockery that she encountered taught her to be more adamant in obeying God and not men. Rev. Clark feels that a lot of male preachers are afraid of breaking from tradition and losing their churches. I do not feel losing a church would be a deterrent to Rev. Clark. Her words of advice are, "If you can't do it in the church, do it in your house." In other words, you must answer the call that God has on your life.

Then I interviewed Catherine Ross. Currently she is preaching and teaching. She was called to preach when she was a member of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio. She did not acknowledge her call right away because she felt that women were not to preach. The call would not let her rest. She kept having dreams. When one of the pastors of Zion Hill started a church, she went with him to help out. She acknowledged her call to the pastor of the satellite church, which was called, Power of Faith Church. The pastor of that church acknowledged her call and allowed her to preach.

Upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, she went back to Zion Hill Baptist church and acknowledged her call. The pastor did not acknowledge her because he did not believe in women preachers. In 1989, the pastor was instructed by the Holy Ghost to let her preach. It took ten years for the pastor to change his mind.

Currently, she is on staff at Power of Faith Church. Four other women have been ordained. Rev. Ross was licensed in 1990. Power of Faith is, now, non-denominational.

This is the case of a person staying with a church until the church changed. Power of Faith elected to be non-denominational because they wanted to break form tradition.

Rev. Ross does not like conflict. She noted that she usually steps back, if there is conflict.

God calls people, and I believe we ought to honor God's call. I see no reason to dismiss a person that claims to be called by God because they happen to be are a woman. Rev. Clark and Rev. Ross answered their calls to preach. The reaction of one was to leave the church were she had been raised, and she has no regrets about leaving. Rev. Ross did not leave the church that did not acknowledge her as a preacher, but the church changed. I will never forget the words of Rev. Clark when she said, "Either you answer the call or you die."

My prayer is that many women that are called by God to preach will not die, because they did not answer the call. People will be debating the scriptures for years to come, and interpretations will abound, but what God tells a person to do is to be done. The gifts of that were given to the church did not have gender conditions associated with them in 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, Romans 12:4-8, and Ephesians 4:11. Those that have been called by God to preach must answer the call. The wished of a few people cannot supercede the will of God. We are to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed for the project was (1) mailed surveys entitled “Survey on Women Preachers” to be completed by randomly selected members of four black Baptist churches, (2) conducted interviews with women preachers that are currently in the black Baptist Church or have left to answer their call elsewhere, and (3) hosted a conference on women preachers. Participants in the four black Baptist churches, and those involved in the conference also completed the surveys consisting of 18 questions (Appendix A). Those who were interviewed answered the 8 questions on the questionnaire (Appendix B). The data gathered from the surveys and the questionnaires was evaluated qualitatively (Appendices F, G, H, and I).

The last category on the survey entitled “community” was used to evaluate how the respondents felt about relating the support of women preachers with participation in the community (Appendix J). The United Theological Seminary peer group focus was cross cultural communication and urban development. Therefore, at issue in this document, is whether or not the acceptance or support of women preachers affects the Black community. To begin an evaluation of the methodology, we review the involvement of the context and professional associates in the preparation of the paper.

Context Associate Involvement

Meetings were held with 14 context associates to plan the project. Appendix E reflects a schedule of events in which the context associates participated. The context associates were Norris Bayless, Michelle Dixon, Minister Charles Byrd, Nina Upchurch, Anita Lucas, Ron Dungey, Brandon Jones, Gayle Simpson, Minister Amy Nooks, Minister Ramee Linton, Angela Howard, and Robyn Henry from First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio, Pastor Vurn O. Mullins from St. John Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio, and Minister Brenda Thomas of Tabernacle Baptist in Dayton, Ohio. Sessions were held with the context associates to (1) understand the project, (2) understand the controversy, (3) review the Biblical foundation, (4) review the historical foundation, and (5) plan the conference.

The context associates were given copies of the Biblical, Historical and Theological papers for the project to help them understand the focus of the model of ministry. Input was requested from the context associates concerning the papers.

Letters were mailed to the context associates advising them of the schedule of meetings and my position of support for women and men preachers that are called by God.

Professional Associate Involvement

The four professional associates also received copies of the Biblical, Historical, and Theological papers for the project. The professional associates were Dr. Larry George, Dr. Jerrie McGill, Dr. Charles Brown, and Dr. John Freeman. They were consulted to obtain input concerning the project. Two professional associates, Dr. Larry

George and Dr. Jerrie McGill helped to plan the conference on women preachers that was held in August, 2004. They were the teachers for the session. Dr. Charles Brown and Dr. John Freeman provided input concerning the project. Dr. Charles Brown recommended many of the participants that participated in the conference. He also provided insight concerning the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. as well as the State, District and local bodies associated with the national convention.

Survey Methodology

The survey was a key component of the project. The survey was used as a common document to evaluate all participants. It was used in four churches and at the conference. The survey was designed to collect demographic information and to get the opinion of the participants regarding issues associated with women preachers. The context associates reviewed the questions and many of them took the survey (Appendix

A). The questions were:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Church:
5. Convention
6. Member for _____ Years
7. Offices Held
8. Did you transfer from another denomination?
9. Name of the denomination transferred from
10. If you transferred, why did you transfer?
11. Do you believe women should be preachers?
12. Do you believe women should be pastors?
13. Are you familiar with scriptures that are relevant to the issue of women preachers?
14. Should women teach men in the church?
15. Should women sing in the choirs in the church?
16. Should women read announcements in the church?
17. Should women lead a ministry in the church?

18. Could limiting the contributions of women in the black Baptist church, by denying them the right to preach or hold other leadership positions affect the black community? Why?

Questions 1-7 dealt with demographics. The participants were asked to give their name, age, church name, denomination, how long they had been a member, and what offices they had held. Questions 8 -10 addressed the issue of whether or not a person had transferred from another denomination and why the transferal occurred. Questions 11-17 were designed to determine whether or not a person was in support of women preachers. Question 13 was significant, because it asked if the participant was familiar with the scriptures regarding women preachers. Question 18 addressed the issue of whether the Black community is or is not affected by the way women preachers are treated in the Black church.

Letters were sent to several congregations in the Dayton, Springfield, and Xenia, Ohio areas to recruit participants (Appendix C). Next we will review the methodology established to interview women preachers.

Interview Methodology

I am not a woman, and I cannot speak for women. Therefore, I developed a plan to interview women preachers one on one. I feel that the voices of women must be raised and heard. Eleven women preachers were interviewed from May 2004 to November 2004. Those interviewed were. Rev. Marjorie Warden, Rev. Amy Nooks, Rev. Tonya Nooks, Rev. Ramee Linton, Rev. Allyson Abrams, Rev. Meylon Clark, Rev. Brenda Thomas, Rev. Kisha Williams, Rev. Jerrie McGill, Rev. Gloria Dillon, and Rev. Sarah Harris (Appendix B).

The interview questions were:

1. Do you believe that the black Baptist church considers women fairly for positions of leadership in the church, i.e. pastors, preachers, deacons, ministers, etc.? Why?
2. Share with me what you believe to be the ideal position the black Baptist church should take concerning the issue of women holding leadership positions like those mentioned above?
3. As a woman that has been called to preach or hold a leadership position in the church, how does the position that the black Baptist church has taken concerning women in leadership positions affect you?
4. Should women that are called to preach, leave the black Baptist church, if they are not afforded the opportunity to exercise the gifts that they have been given? What advice would you give women that decide to leave?
5. What advice would you give to women that decide to stay in the black Baptist church that have been called to preach or hold other leadership positions?
6. If you feel that women are not considered fairly for positions of leadership in the black Baptist church, do you feel that the treatment in the church affects how those women will participate in the black community? Why or why not?
7. What do you feel could be done to help the communication process concerning women preachers?
8. Share with me how it feels to be a woman in the black Baptist church that has been called by God to preach or hold a leadership position.

The questions were asked in a comfortable setting, in which the participants were encouraged to share how they felt about the issue of women preachers and their personal experiences in the black Baptist church. The next area that we will examine is the methodology established for the conference on women preachers.

Conference on Women Preachers Methodology

The conference was designed to assist in the communication process. The major goal of the conference was to get the issue of women preachers on the table. Churches

were invited to participate were from the Dayton, Springfield, and Xenia, Ohio area. A notice about the conference was published in the *Xenia Daily Gazette*.

On April 21, 2004 I met with Dr. Larry George and Dr. Jerrie McGill to develop the plans for the conference. The conference was held on Friday, August 14th and Saturday, August 15th, 2004. A worship service was held on August 14 and 15 at 7:00 P.M. with a woman preaching on Friday and a man preaching on Saturday. The rationale was that having a man and a woman preach might encourage more involvement from those who would be opposed to a woman preaching.

An additional service was added to the conference. Sunday, August 15, 2005 would feature Pastor Allyson Abrams from Speak the Truth Baptist Church in Detroit, Michigan as the morning worship preacher at First Baptist Church.

The training session for the conference was held on Saturday, August 15, 2004 from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Dr. George and Dr. McGill conducted the training. There was an initial interview session, in which Dr. George interviewed Dr. McGill after which Dr. McGill, interview Dr. George. The purpose for the interviewing was to exhibit the differences in the experiences of the male and female preachers. After the interview session, the men met with Dr. George and afterward met with Dr. McGill, Conversely, the women were to meet with Dr. McGill first and then meet with Dr. George. The rationale was that each would feel more comfortable sharing with persons of the same sex. However, it was the hope of Dr. McGill and Dr. George that both the men and the women would share how they felt openly.

The following is a list of potential questions was developed for the conference.

1. Should communication be improved on the issue of recognizing women preachers in the black faith church? Why?
2. Why is it so difficult for women preachers to be fully recognized in the black faith community?
3. Should women that are called to preach be advocated within their denominations in the black faith community?
4. What do you believe the position of the black faith community should be concerning the issue of recognizing women preachers?
5. How do you believe the issue of not fully recognizing women preachers in the black faith community could affect the black community, as a whole?

Following us a list of potential participants.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Rev. John Cunningham -P | Rev. Lynel Beaty |
| 2. Rev. Leroy Stills | Rev. Brenda Thomas |
| 3. Rev. Dr. Junior Greenlee - P | Rev. Eunice Andrews |
| 4. Rev. Dr. Joseph Coleman - P, S | Rev. Marva Hughes - P |
| 5. Rev. Joseph Young | Rev. Gloria Dillon |
| 6. Rev. Dr. Charles Brown - P | Rev. Kima Cunningham – P, W |
| 7. Rev. Dr. Robert Baines - P | Rev. Dr. Ella Mitchell - S |
| 8. Rev. Selwyn Backus | Rev. Vanessa Ward - P |
| 9. Rev. Dr. Perry Henderson - P | Rev. Dr. Beverly Daniels - P |
| 10. Rev. Dr. William Harris | Rev. Dr. Faye Taylor |
| 11. Rev. Dr. Donald Thompson – P, S | Rev. Dr. Grace Clay |
| 12. Rev. Daryl Grayson | Elder Flonzie Wright (7 th Day Adventist) |
| 13. Rev. Ernest Brown | Rev. Angela Edwards (Payne) - P |
| 14. Rev. Gary Chapman | Rev. Dr. Marva Mitchell (Revival Center) |
| 15. Rev. Lorenzo Burks | Rev. Dr. Beverly Martin |
| 16. Rev. Daryl Ward | Rev. Dannethel McGowan - P |
| 17. Rev. Earl Harris (AME) | |
| 18. Rev. Samuel Winston | P = Panel Member |
| 19. Rev. Raleigh Trammel | S = Speaker |
| 20. Rev. Dr. William Augman (UM) – P | W = Worship Leader |
| 21. Rev. Dr. Leroy Jones (UM) | |
| 22. Rev. Larry Coleman | |
| 23. Rev. Dr. Truman Martin | |

A request was made for resource materials to be sent or brought to the conference to encourage scholarship and study.

After some planning and discussion the final plan was similar to the initial plan with the following exceptions. The speakers for the worship service were identified as Dr. Robert Baines and Dr. Ella Mitchell. The panelists were identified as:

Rev. Dr. John Cunningham	Mt. Enon Baptist Church, Dayton
Rev. Ethel Munlin	Harvest Time Christian Center, Dayton
Rev. Dr. Junior Greenlee	Zion Hill Baptist Church, Dayton
Rev. Marva Hughes	Omega Baptist Church, Dayton
Rev. Dr. Charles Brown	Bethel Baptist Church, Dayton
Rev. Kima Cunningham	Mt. Enon Baptist Church, Dayton

A class-pack of materials would be made available of papers to share with the conference participants. The class-pack consisted of papers from scholars and conference participants that were both in support of and opposed to women preachers.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Three activities occurred, (1) surveys were completed at four black Baptist churches, (2) eleven women preachers were interviewed that were either in the black Baptist church or who had once been a member of a black Baptist church, and (3) a conference on women preachers was held from August 13 to 15, 2004. I will review the work that was done in each area. For a detailed listing of my fieldwork I have attached Appendix E, Schedule for Context and Professional Associates below.

Context Associates

My field work began with and was shaped by meetings with the context associates. I began a series of meetings with the context associates on March 13, 2004. That meeting was a general review of the project. The thoughts of the context associates regarding the issue of women preachers, was discussed. Subsequent meetings occurred on April 17, 2004 where the controversy of women preachers was discussed, on May 15, 2004 where the Biblical basis for the controversy was discussed, on June 19, 2004 where the historical setting of 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy (text quoted as being opposed to women preachers) was discussed, and the training outline was developed and discussed on July 10, 2004. Many of the context associates (1) took the survey, (2) were interviewed and (3) assisted with the conference on women preachers. Minister Brenda

Thomas led the worship service on Friday evening in association with the conference. Minister Amy Nooks shared her gift of singing during the Friday, Saturday and Sunday worship services associated with the conference by leading praise and worship. Context associate Minister Ramee Linton assisted in the administrative work and Angela Howard assisted in the financial coordination for the conference. Pastor Vurn O. Mullins, Gayle Simpson, Minister Amy Nooks, Minister Ramee Linton, Michelle Dixon and Robyn Henry attended the conference. The professional associates were, also involved in the project at many points.

Professional Associates

Meetings were held with the professional associates from March to May, 2004. On April 24, 2004 An initial meeting was held with Dr. Jerrie McGill and Dr. Larry George concerning training for the conference on women preachers. A training plan for the conference on women preachers was developed from May to July, 2004. The training plan was reviewed on July 17, 2004. Dr. Jerrie McGill and Dr. Larry George conducted the conference from August 13-15, 2004.

During the conference, Dr. Larry George provided Biblical interpretation of the scriptures, while both Dr. McGill and Dr. George provided reflections on how they became ministers and their experiences over the years as ministers. The difference in the way Dr. Jerrie McGill and Dr. Larry George were treated, as preachers, was apparent from their reflections. Dr. George received preferential treatment as a male preacher. Dr. Charles Brown was to be a panelist, but he was unable to participate due to a conflict in scheduling. Dr. John Freeman assisted in providing music for the Friday worship service.

As a man, I do not feel adequate to speak for women preachers. In an effort to hear from women preachers, I attended a conference sponsored by "Women Empowered to Embrace Change" (WETEC). The conference was held from April 1st to the 3rd, 2004. The conference featured the gifts that God has given to women preachers. Black and white women preachers led the worship service and delivered messages. On Thursday, April 1, 2004 the service was held at The Living Word Church in Vandalia, Ohio. The Friday service was held at Mt. Enon Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. The Saturday morning service was held at Omega Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. The Saturday evening banquet was held at Maranatha Christian Fellowship in Dayton, Ohio. The speakers for the banquet included: Rev. Jerrie McGill, Rev. Brenda Thomas, Elder Flossie Wright, Rev. Kima Cunningham, Dr. Joyce Elder, and Rev. Ella Mitchell. The gifts that God has given to women preachers were celebrated in the worship and preaching experience in the conference.

To further hear from women preachers, I attended some monthly sessions of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and Coalition (IMAC) in Dayton, Ohio on March 20, 2004. There is a fellowship period and a worship service conducted at each meeting. From that meeting I became aware why some women preachers must form their own organizations in order to exercise their gifts. Many women hold leadership positions in other organizations. They led worship service, taught and preached.

Survey Field Experience

Four churches participated in the survey, along with the conference participants. There were 135 people that took the survey. Four of the eleven churches that were

requested to take the survey completed the survey questions. Many churches would not complete the survey. There was reluctance for people to fill out surveys. Two pastors that I talked to stated that their people were tired of filling out surveys. They did not want to ask them to fill out another one.

I was invited by a woman preacher in the Philadelphia area to attend a conference of women preachers in the summer of 2004. I planned to take surveys to the conference and interview women preachers at the conference. The day before I was to go to the conference, I received a call from a representative of the President of the conference informing me not to come. I was advised that they didn't want to cause any trouble. A representative of the President of the association that was sponsoring the conference stated that many women had already "made it," and they didn't want to do anything to damage their position. I was disappointed that I was not allowed to attend the conference. I called the person who had invited me to the conference and advised her that I had been requested not to attend. She was not aware that such action had been taken. She invited me to come at another time to get interviews that she would arrange. I have not been able to go back to Philadelphia to interview the women preachers in that area.

In addition to asking the congregants to fill out the surveys, I asked the pastors to also fill out the surveys. This would enable me to compare the congregant's responses to those given by the pastors. Many participants at the conference did not fill out the surveys. It appeared that those some who were in opposition to women preachers chose not to participate in the surveys. Some people that filled out the surveys did not respond to all of the questions.

The results were tabulated by church. Total numbers were arrived at.

Percentages were determined for each question. It was determined what percentage of the people who answered the questions said yes, no, or they were uncertain. The results from the churches and the conference were compared to the total numbers which was a summary of the four churches and the conference.

Following is a summary of the age and gender of the participants who took the survey on women preachers. Two of the participants did not give their age. Therefore, the age of 133 people is listed, while the number of people listed under gender is 135.

TABLE 1

AGE AND GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS THAT TOOK THE
SURVEY ON WOMEN PREACHERS, 2004¹

	Age							Gender	
	0-12	13-17	18-21	22-30	31-40	41-60	60+	Male	Female
Mt. Zion	0	0	1	2	1	8	28	15	26
Kansas City	0	0	0	0	1	4	3	6	2
St. John	0	1	2	1	15	24	14	15	42
Conference	0	0	1	1	5	17	4	8	21
Total	0	1	4	4	22	53	49	44	91
First Baptist	0	0	0	2	1	6	2	1	10

Table 1 is a summary of the members from four churches and the participants at the conference on women preachers that was conducted on August 14, 2004 that took the survey on women preachers. The total participants were 91 females and 44 male. Mt. Zion in Springfield, Ohio had 40 people participate, Pleasant Green in Kansas City, Kansas had 8 people participate, St. John in Springfield, Ohio had 57 participants, there were 28 people that took the survey at the conference for a total participation of 133

¹ This table is a compilation of data obtained from surveys taken from May to November of 2004 at First Baptist Church in yellow Springs, Ohio, St. John Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio, Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio and Pleasant green Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas. The data was collected as a part of a doctoral studies program for Pastor James A. Nooks.

people. The people that participated in the conference from First Baptist in Yellow Springs were shown separately to learn from the data, because First Baptist is the primary ministry focus.

The age of the participants can be significant. Some people assume that younger people will be more receptive to women preachers than older people. The number of people that took the survey from the various age groups are as follows. There was no participation in the age range of 0-12. One person took the survey in the age range of 13-17. There were four people that took the survey in the age group 18-21, four in the category of 22-30, while 22 people from the age group 31-40, 53 people in the age group of 41-60, and 49 people took the survey that were over 60 years of age. There were 44 men that took the survey and 91 women.

First Baptist had no one in age groups 0-12 and 13-21, 2 people in the age group of 22-30, 1 person in the age group 31-40, 6 in the age group of 41-60 and 2 people that were over the age of 60. There was one man and 10 women that took the survey. An immediate observation is that 11 people is not a high percentage of participation from First Baptist. There are approximately 150 members of First Baptist with approximately 60 that attend regularly. Many people did not take the survey. The participation or lack thereof of the people at First Baptist may be indicative of the participation of the other churches.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS BY AGE THAT TOOK THE SURVEY ON WOMEN PREACHERS²

Question #	#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			#17			#18	
Church	Women Preachers			Women Pastors			Fam. with Scrip.			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Min.			Community	
	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N
Total																							
13-17	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
18-21	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	80%	0%	20%	100%	0%
22-30	75%	0%	25%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	80%	0%	20%	100%	0%
31-40	77%	18%	5%	55%	18%	27%	64%	36%	0%	75%	0%	25%	95%	0%	5%	95%	0%	5%	81%	0%	19%	91%	9%
41-60	88%	2%	10%	61%	12%	27%	71%	19%	10%	90%	2%	7%	95%	2%	2%	100%	0%	0%	75%	13%	11%	97%	3%
60+	88%	0%	13%	75%	8%	17%	65%	27%	8%	85%	2%	13%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	92%	2%	6%	94%	6%
Total	81%	7%	13%	67%	14%	20%	64%	28%	8%	89%	2%	8%	98%	1%	1%	99%	0%	1%	94%	2%	5%	91%	9%
First Baptist																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
13-17																							
18-21																							
22-30	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
31-40	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
41-60	100%	0%	0%	0%	75%	25%	75%	75%	0%	50%	17%	33%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	83%	17%
60+	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
First Baptist	91%	0%	9%	60%	10%	30%	91%	9%	0%	70%	0%	30%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	90%	0%	10%	88%	13%

Table 2 shows a comparison of how the respondents answered the survey questions by age. The survey question number is given above the question asked. As an example, question #11 referred to the question, "Should women be preachers?" The responses of the participants from First Baptist in Yellow Springs, Ohio are given, because they are the primary focus of the project. The responses to the questions by the pastors were indicated by placing an "X" in the answer that was given by the pastor. In this way, the responses of the congregants were compared to those of the pastor.

Analyzing the data from Table 2, we can see that overall the participants under the age of 21 were supportive of women preachers as well as pastors. They were, in fact, supportive of women teaching men, leading ministry and they felt that how women preachers are treated in the church affects how they will participate in the Black community. The 13 to 21 year olds did not indicate that they knew the scriptures associated with the issue of women preachers. The 41 to 60+ groups were more

² Ibid.

supportive of women preachers and pastors than was the group between the age of 22-60. The older group had an 88% approval rate for women preachers and a 61 and 75% approval rate for women pastors. The 22-40 year old groups had approval rates of 75-77% for women preachers and 0-55% for women pastors.

First Baptist gave a 100% approval rating to women preachers in all age groups between the age of 22-60. First Baptist varied on the issue of women pastors, giving a 100% approval rate in the 22-40 year old groups, a 0% approval rate in the in the 40-60 year old groups, and a 50% approval rating in the 60+age grouping. Refer to Appendix I for a complete listing of the results for all participants.

The qualitative data reveals there is not a direct correlation of approval to age. The results varied by church, and many of the older participants were in support of women preachers and pastors. Refer to Appendixes H and I to view the data associated with age.

Table 3, below, shows the participants that took the survey on women preachers by church. The data for each church is followed by the opinion of the pastor of the respective church. The opinion of the pastor is indicated by an "X." The purpose in indicating the opinion of the pastor is to show the correlation of the opinion of the congregants to that of the pastor. In other words, do the people in the church feel the same way about women preachers as their pastor does?

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF SURVEY ON WOMEN PREACHERS, 2004³

Question#	#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			17			#18	
	Women Preachers			Women Pastors			Fam with Scrip			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Min.			Community	
Church	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N
Mt. Zion	88	2	10	76	7	17	49	38	13	89	3	8	100	0	0	100	0	0	92	3	5	98	7
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Kansas City	75	13	13	50	13	8	63	25	13	100	0	0	88	13	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	88	17
Assist. Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
St. John	72	10	17	58	19	23	58	33	9	89	4	7	98	0	2	98	0	2	94	2	4	89	11
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Conference	89	4	7	78	11	11	96	4	0	88	0	13	100	0	0	100	0	0	96	0	4	95	5
Total	81	7	13	67	14	20	64	28	8	89	2	8	98	1	1	99	0	1	94	2	5	91	9
First Baptist	91	0	9	60	10	30	91	9	0	70	0	30	100	0	0	100	0	0	90	0	10	88	13

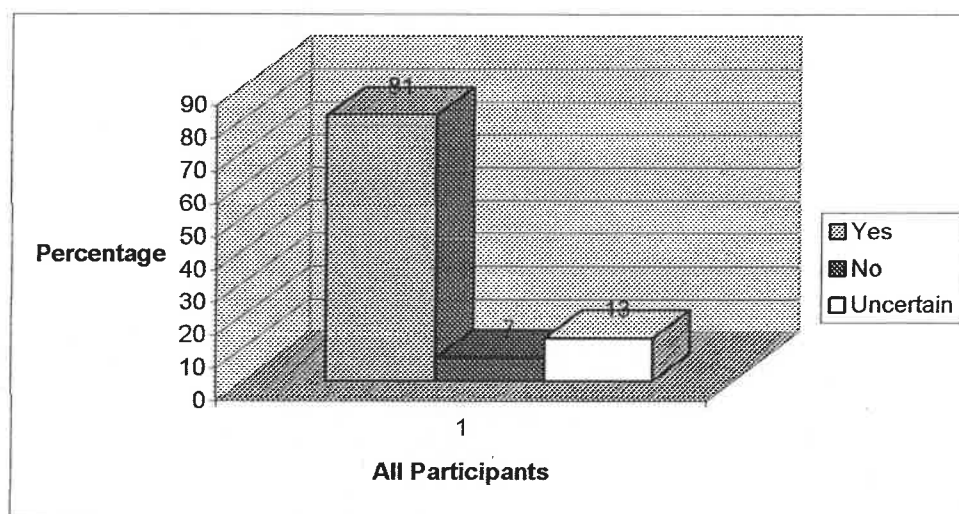


Figure 3. Summary of all participants answering the question, "Should women preach?"⁴

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

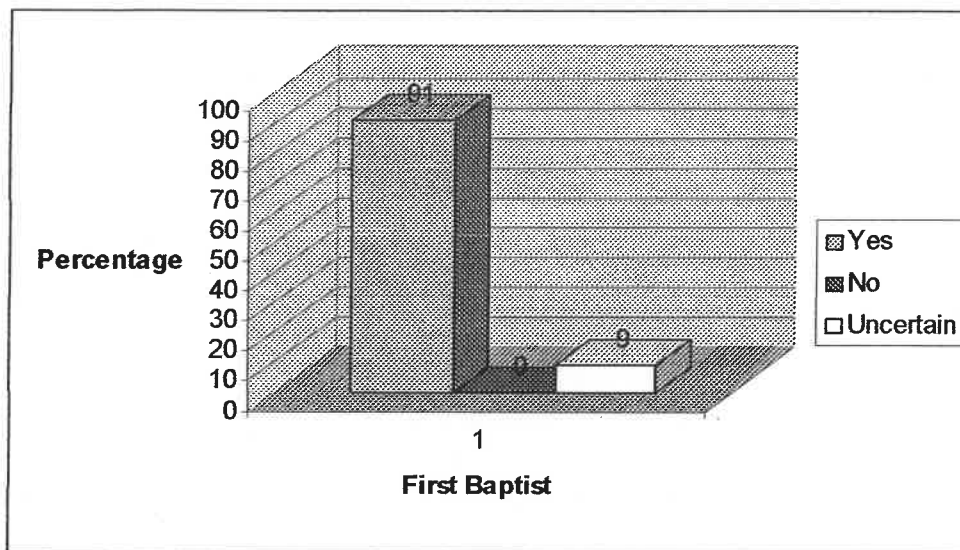


Figure 4. Summary of First Baptist participants answering the question, “Should women preach?”⁵

In reviewing the data, we can see that 98 % of the participants believe that women should sing in the choir and 99% believe that women can make announcements. If we are to take 1 Timothy 2:11-12 literally and apply it universally, we would have to conclude that women should not sing in the choir nor make announcements, because the literal interpretation would silence women.

Continuing with a focus on Timothy 2:11-12, we find that the 89% approval for women to teach men would also conflict with a literal interpretation of the text. The text states that women should not usurp authority over a man.

The vast majority of the participants (94%) believed that a woman could lead a ministry. It is interesting to note that First Baptist had the lowest percentage (90%) in this category. Pleasant Green had the highest percentage (100%). Perhaps the high percentages are indicative of people understanding that God can use women in different

⁵ Ibid.

ministries. The term “ministry” may be a safe term for people to use. There are many ministries that a person can lead and be a part of. Many of them do not have to be ministries of preaching, pastoring or filling a traditional leadership role in the church.

Concerning the question of whether a woman should preach, the participants had an 81% overall approval rate (Figure 3). St. John was the church with the lowest percentage rating (72%), while First Baptist had the highest rating (91%). Mt. Zion and those that participated in the conference were close behind First Baptist with ratings of 88% and 89% respectively (Figure 4). Pleasant Green was close to St. John with a 75% rating.

The issue of whether a woman should be a pastor appears to be more difficult for people to accept, in the Baptist church. The approval rating was 67% (Figure 5). Those that participated at the conference had the highest approval rating (78%). Perhaps this can be explained due to the fact there were more women that were more supportive of women in ministry may have attended the conference. Mt. Zion was close to the conference participants with an approval rating of 76%. Pleasant Green had the lowest approval rating (50%) while St. John and First Baptist were close with approval ratings of 58% and 60% (Figure 6) respectively.

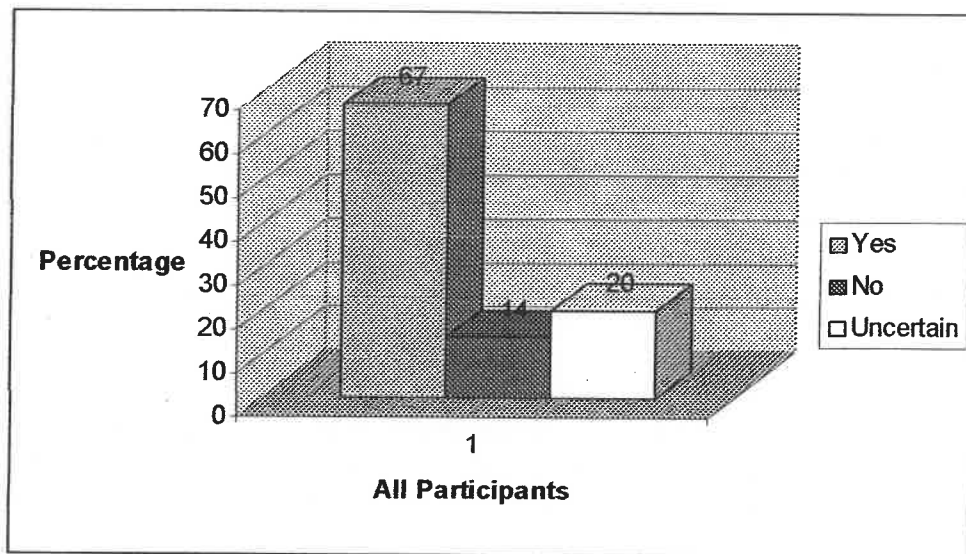


Figure 5. Summary of all participants answering the question, “Should women pastor?”⁶

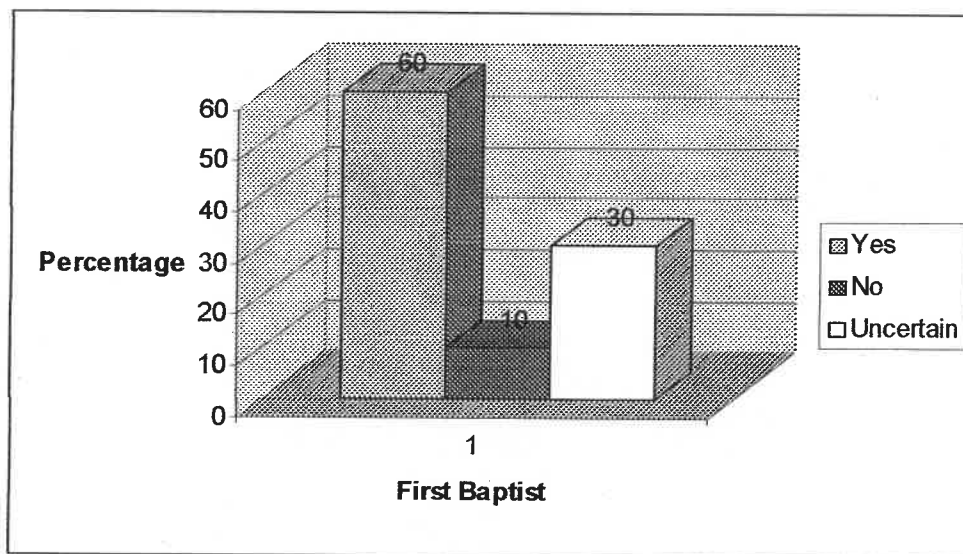


Figure 6. Summary of First Baptist participants answering the question, “Should women pastor?”⁷

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

It is interesting to note on Table 3 that 91% of some respondents felt that there was a connection between how women preachers are treated in the black Baptist church and the Black community (Figure 7). Appendix J, which deals with the peer group focus of intercultural communication and urban development, details the data collected addressing the issue of whether the Black community is affected by how women preachers are treated in the black Baptist church. How one is treated in one venue can affect how they react in another. This reaction can be positive or negative, depending upon the person. Some women, if they feel that they are not treated right in the black Baptist church may put more of their effort and gifts into the success of the black community. Still others may be adversely affected. If they feel that they cannot use their gifts in the church, they may not use them in another venue like the Black community.

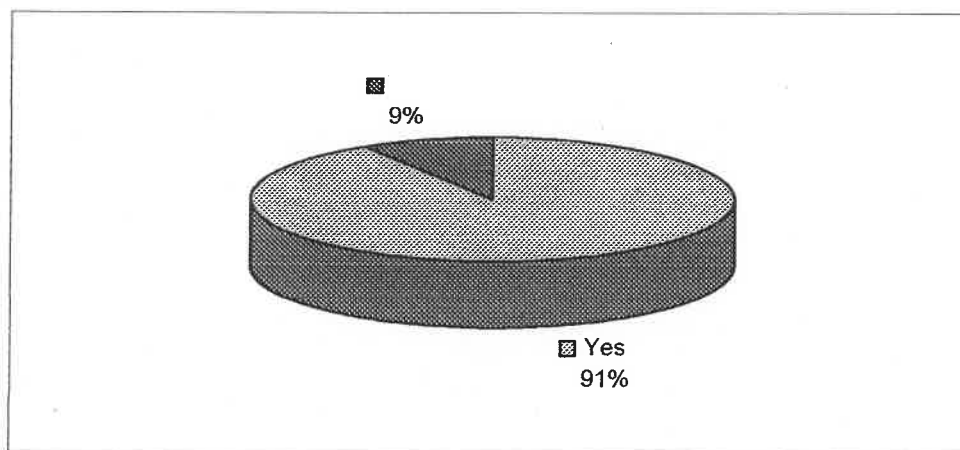


Figure 7. Summary of all participants answering the question, “Is the Black community affected?”⁸

⁸ Ibid.

When we look at the answers of the pastors, we see that the churches follow the opinion of the pastors, for the most part. However, First Baptist did not follow the opinion of the pastor concerning women pastors as strongly. The 60% rating would indicate that this may be an area of concern for the church. Pleasant Green from Kansas City, appeared to share the opinion of the assistant pastor regarding women pastors. He was undecided on the issue. Mt. Zion's high approval rating of 88% would indicate that the church is tracking with their pastor on the issue of women pastors.

After describing the fieldwork encountered in obtaining information from the surveys, we turn our attention to the interviews.

Table 4 is an analysis of how men and women feel about the issue of women preachers? Appendix F and G provide the detailed data that was collected for this analysis. Table 4 is a qualitative analysis of how men and women answered the survey questions.

TABLE 4

ANALYSIS OF HOW MEN AND WOMEN RESPONDED TO SURVEY QUESTIONS⁹

Question #	#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			#17			#18	
	Women Preachers			Women Pastors			Fam. with Scrip.			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Min.			Community	
	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N
Church																							
Mount Zion																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	93%	0%	7%	67%	13%	20%	33%	33%	33%	93%	0%	7%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	87%	0%	13%	93%	7%
Female	85%	4%	12%	77%	8%	15%	54%	31%	15%	92%	4%	4%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	96%	4%	0%	100%	0%
Mt. Zion	88%	2%	10%	76%	7%	17%	49%	38%	13%	89%	3%	8%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	92%	3%	5%	93%	7%
Kansas City																							
Asst. Pastor	X				X		X			X			X			X			X				
Male	67%	17%	17%	50%	33%	17%	50%	33%	17%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	60%	40%
Female	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Kansas City	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
St. John																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	67%	7%	27%	22%	22%	56%	17%	67%	17%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	83%	7%	10%	63%	24%	12%	70%	26%	5%	95%	0%	5%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
St. John	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%
Conference																							
Male	75%	13%	13%	75%	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	100%	0%	0%	80%	5%	15%	100%	0%	0%	84%	0%	16%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Conference	89%	4%	7%	78%	11%	11%	96%	4%	0%	88%	0%	13%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	96%	0%	4%	95%	5%
Total																							
Male	77%	7%	16%	55%	21%	24%	44%	37%	20%	97%	0%	3%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	95%	0%	5%	91%	9%
Female	88%	4%	8%	72%	15%	13%	72%	21%	7%	92%	1%	7%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	99%	1%	0%	100%	0%
Total	81%	7%	13%	67%	14%	20%	64%	28%	8%	89%	2%	8%	98%	1%	1%	99%	0%	1%	94%	2%	5%	91%	9%
First Baptist																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	90%	0%	10%	60%	10%	30%	100%	0%	0%	70%	0%	30%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	90%	10%
First Baptist	91%	0%	9%	60%	10%	30%	91%	9%	0%	70%	0%	30%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	90%	0%	10%	88%	13%

Per Appendix F, the women were more supportive of women preachers than men. The females recorded an 88% approval rating, while the men recorded a 77% approval rating. Women responded to the question of whether a woman should be a pastor with a 72% approval rate, while the men responded at a rate of 55%. The lower rating of approval for women pastors was also reflected in many conversations that I had with participants and the congregants of First Baptist Church. On Table 4, First Baptist had a 91% approval rate for women preachers, with a 100 % approval rating from the men and a 90% approval rating from the women. The women at First Baptist responded at a rate of 60% approval for women as pastors, while the men responded at 100%. It should be noted that only one man from First Baptist took the survey.

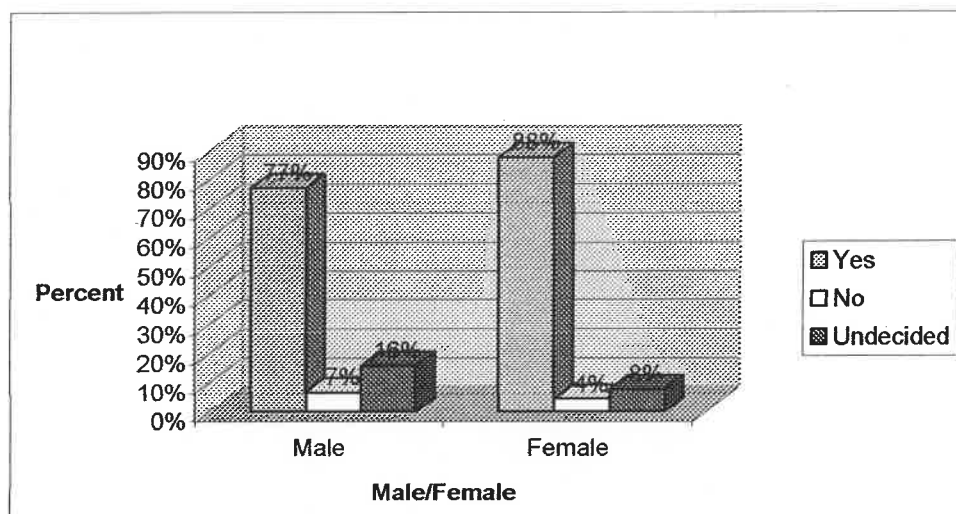


Figure 8. Summary of all participants by gender answering the question, “Should women preach?”¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid.

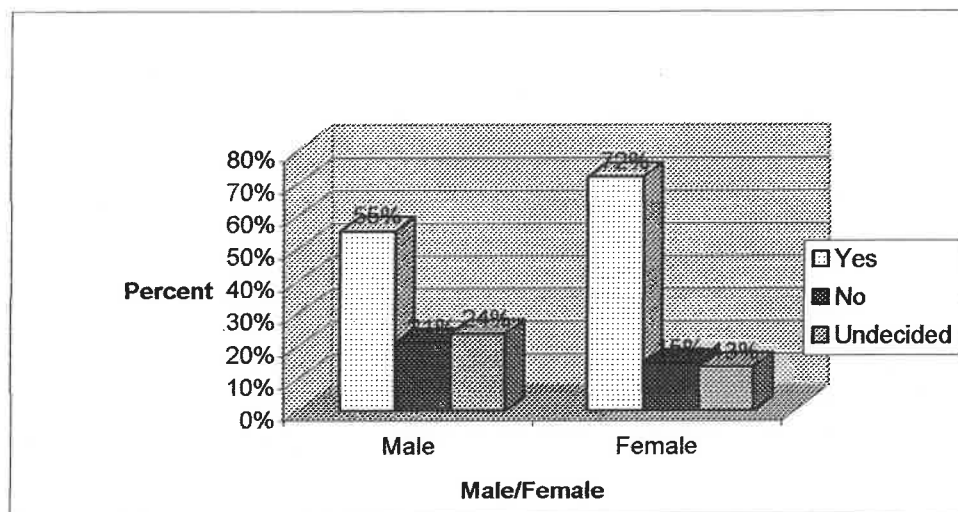


Figure 9. Summary of all participants by gender answering the question, “Should women preach?”¹¹

The men of Mt. Zion had a 93% approval rating for women preachers and a 67% approval rating for women as pastors. The women of Mt. Zion gave an 85% approval rating to women preachers and a 77% approval rating to women as pastors.

The male respondents from Pleasant Green Baptist Church in Kansas City had a 67% approval rating for women as preachers and a 50% approval rating of women as pastors. The women of Pleasant Green showed a considerable difference of opinion. They expressed a 100% approval rating for women preachers and women pastors. The Assistant Pastor was undecided about women pastors, but they approved of women preachers. This data could indicate that there may be conflict concerning this issue at Pleasant Green.

The men of St. John Baptist Church gave the issue of women preachers a rating of 67%, and expressed the lowest approval rating of all the churches on the issue of women

¹¹ Ibid.

pastors with a rating of 22%. The women, however, expressed an 83% approval for women preachers and a 63% approval rating for women pastors. The pastor of the church was in favor of women preachers and opposed to women pastors. The approval ratings reflect the position of the pastor. However there is a considerable difference in the way women feel about women preachers and pastors as opposed to the way the men felt.

The male conference participants gave the issue of women preachers a rating of 75%, and they gave a 75% approval rating to women pastors. The women conference participants gave the two issues higher ratings. They rated the issue of women preachers at 100% and women pastors at 80%.

The overall numbers indicate that women are more informed about the scriptures pertaining to women preachers than men. The men responded positively to this question at a rate of 44%, while the women responded at a rate of 72%.

Most participants responded positively to the issues of women singing, announcing and leading a ministry. There was, however, some variation concerning whether women should teach men. The men gave this issue a rating of 97%, while the women responded at a rate of 92% to the affirmative. While there were variations at the different churches, the men responded positively at a higher rate than did the women.

Many people feel that the younger people are more supportive of women preachers and pastors. This feeling is borne out of the perception that those who are older tend to lean more toward tradition, while younger people are more receptive to looking openly at issues.

Interview Field Experience

I interviewed eleven women preachers. The results of the interviews were tabulated and compared. All interviews were tape-recorded. Those interviewed were. Rev. Marjorie Warden, Rev. Amy Nooks, Rev. Tonya Nooks, Rev. Ramee Linton, Rev. Allyson Abrams, Rev. Meylon Clark, Rev. Brenda Thomas, Rev. Kisha Williams, Rev. Jerrie McGill, Rev. Gloria Dillon, and Rev. Sarah Harris. None of the women felt that the black Baptist church treated women fairly in considering them for preacher, pastor, or other leadership roles.

The interview questions were:

1. Do you believe that the black Baptist church considers women fairly for positions of leadership in the church, i.e. pastors, preachers, deacons, ministers, etc.? Why?

Rev. Gloria Dillon and Rev. Marjorie Warden felt that the church had been misguided by some scriptures.¹² Rev. Amy Nooks, Tonya Nooks, Rev. Brenda Thomas, and Rev. Jerry McGill cited the fact that there is little evidence to the NBC, Inc, accepting women in leadership positions.¹³ Rev. Allyson Abrams cited the lack of seminary training as potential reason for the unfair treatment,¹⁴ while others cited tradition as the reason for the lack of fair treatment.

2. Share with me what you believe to be the ideal position the black Baptist church should take concerning the issue of women holding leadership positions like those mentioned above?

¹² Gloria Dillon, interviewed by author, 8 November 2004, Xenia, Ohio, and Marjorie Warden, interviewed by author, 6 May 2004, Chicago, Illinois, tape recording.

¹³ Amy Nooks, interviewed by author, 20 October 2004, Xenia, Ohio, and Tonya Nooks, interviewed by author, 14 November 2004, Columbus, Ohio, and Brenda Thomas, interviewed by author, 4 November 2004, Dayton, Ohio, and Jerrie McGill, interviewed by author, 4 November 2004, Dayton, Ohio, tape recording.

¹⁴ Allyson Abrams, interviewed by author, 17 June 2004, Detroit, Michigan, tape recording.

There was a general consensus that the church should not have the right to determine whether a woman should preach. They felt that such a decision is God's job. Rev. Kisha Williams stated:

I think they should take the position that if God has called you, you should be accepted. There should be more prayer from the church in how to lead people in the gifts that they have. When you can't embrace a person and their gift, you leave people out there.¹⁵

Dr. Jerrie McGill states:

I believe that the church should follow the teaching of Jesus. Paul said that all are equal in Christ Jesus. We should also follow the teachings of Joel. Historically women were not mentioned in the Bible, because they were not given positions of leadership.¹⁶

3. As a woman that has been called to preach or hold a leadership position in the church, how does the position that the black Baptist church has taken concerning women in leadership positions affect you?

I felt that it was important to hear from all of the women preachers interviewed on this issue. Below are comments from each participant:

Rev. Marjorie Warden made the following comments.

There is a limit put upon the women. We are not able to exercise all that God has given us. We can't stand in the same pulpit as the male preacher stands from. We are given small groups or missionary groups. We are segmented into certain groups.¹⁷

¹⁵ Kisha Williams, interviewed by author, 11 June, 2004, tape recording.

¹⁶ Jerrie McGill, interviewed by author.

¹⁷ Marjorie Warden, interviewed by author.

Rev. Amy Nooks made the following comments.

Intimidating. I believe God wants to use me on a broad scale. I believe I will be sent to areas where I will not be embraced. It is difficult. To not be accepted is a scary thing for human beings--period.¹⁸

Rev. Tonya Nooks stated:

Live peaceably with all men, if possible. There is a warring going on with women that are called. They are in a physical, spiritual, and natural battles when you affirm a calling. You will be affected personally and in your family. You will be under attack. Women that are called have to be courageous, because you will be fought. There is a question as to whether or not your gift(s) will be utilized. Sometimes God gives women opportunities to go somewhere else or use your talents in different ways. We want to be utilized. Many women have served effectively in the Baptist church. Everybody is not called to be a missionary. Women are called to different positions.¹⁹

Rev. Ramee Linton shared:

First Baptist is different. It bothers me that they boycott, when it is time for me to preach. I consider this a loss of a blessing. When a man or a woman preaches, someone can be blessed. There is not support for some preachers based on people's own opinions.²⁰

Rev. Meylon Clark stated:

I feel that it would, in many ways, become a stumbling block to her being the successful leader that God has called her to be. We are talking about a male dominated denomination. If the church is not supportive of women preachers, they are not going to provide what is required for her to be recognized and promoted.²¹

¹⁸ Amy Nooks, interviewed by author.

¹⁹ Tonya Nooks, interviewed by author.

²⁰ Ramee Linton, interviewed by author, 20 October, 2004, Xenia, Ohio, tape recording.

²¹ Meylon Clark, interviewed by author, 6 May 2004, Chicago, Illinois, tape recording.

Rev. Allyson Abrams had the following to say:

It affects me a lot. If I am to remain in the Baptist church, what the Baptists decide trickles down to me. You can feel the rejection of some pastors, deacons, etc. Rejections affect you. It holds you back. You can't participate as you should. You can't hold a leadership position. Often people won't receive you, because you are a woman. It hinders a lot of people from being blessed. It's sad, because some people need to hear the female voice, and they are not getting what they need.²²

Rev. Brenda Thomas is concerned about remaining in her church. She stated:

I have not been a part of my church or any other traditional church. I am not an authority on all churches. My experience has caused me to not want to be connected with anything formal. I am sick of what is happening in the church. I was the second woman to be licensed in my church. My feeling is that it is acceptable to be a female minister in our own church, but we are not recognized outside of our own church. The other female preacher in our church will not attend service outside of the church, because of that lack of recognition. It hurts that our pastor does not recognize the women preachers outside of the local church. It has impacted me. There is so much about the traditional church that bothers me.²³

Rev. Jerrie McGill had the following to say:

I go where I can. I have observed that many men don't get the opportunity to preach either. If someone were to have more opportunities, they would have to go somewhere else. There are very few opportunities in the black Baptist church.²⁴

²² Allyson Abrams, interviewed by author, 17 June 2004, Detroit, Michigan, tape recording.

²³ Brenda Thomas, interviewed by author.

²⁴ Jerrie McGill, interviewed by author.

Rev. Kisha Williams was affected negatively. She states:

I think it has affected me negatively, because you are not accepted. They look at you as though it cannot be God. They assume that God can't use you, because you are a woman. When people don't receive you, it causes you to question so many things.²⁵

Rev. Gloria Dillon shared an interesting story about her not being accepted as a preacher, initially. She said:

It doesn't affect me on a daily basis, because Omega embraces women preachers. It affects me when I go to other churches. As an example, at funerals, I have to stand on the floor and wait to be affirmed by a male pastor. I was asked to speak at my home church. My husband, who is not a preacher, was listed as a preacher. The pastor asked my husband where he wanted to preach from. I was asked to sit on the floor. My husband said that I will preach.²⁶

Rev. Sarah L. Harris was the only woman preacher that was all right with how the women preachers have been treated. She is from Kansas City, Kansas.

Rev. Harris states:

I am all right with their position, believing that God will allow our talents to make room for us.²⁷

4. Should women that are called to preach, leave the black Baptist church, if they are not afforded the opportunity to exercise the gifts that they have been given? What advice would you give women that decide to leave?

Most of the participants stated that they would not advise anyone to leave a church unless God was directing that person to leave. However two of the participants

²⁵ Kisha Williams, interviewed by author, , 11 June 11, 2004, Bryans Road, Maryland, tape recording.

²⁶ Gloria Dillon, interviewed by author.

²⁷ Sarah Harris, interviewed by author, 4 August, 2004, Springfield, Ohio, survey.

stated they would advise a person to leave or go where they could use their gifts. Rev.

Harris stated:

I would go where I could exercise my gift. Make sure that it is God who is leading, and follow his lead.²⁸

Rev. Gloria Dillon was more direct in stating:

Most definitely. I had to leave my home church. I cannot go to a church where I would have to choose obedience to my pastor over obedience to God. I had to leave my church and people that I loved. When you marry and decide to follow God, if you have to move, you have to move. When you sit on a gift that God has given you and you just sit there, God doesn't honor what you are doing.²⁹

An even more severe position was taken by Rev. Brenda Thomas. She shared that many women seek validation from men and churches. She advises that women should not do that any more. Rev. Thomas stated:

I wanted to establish a fellowship with women preachers, where ordination could be stressed. Many women go outside of their home church to get ordained. They go back to their home churches. The women will do everything that they can to like themselves. They don't want to call themselves Rev. They need to stop looking for affirmation from churches. If you are not embraced or accepted, why keep going back. Many sisters won't accept being ordained outside of the traditional means. Many of the women preachers don't feel that they are affirmed unless they are affirmed by a man.³⁰

5. What advice would you give to women that decide to stay in the black Baptist church that have been called to preach or hold other leadership positions?

²⁸ Sarah Harris, interviewed by author.

²⁹ Gloria Dillon, interviewed by author.

³⁰ Brenda Thomas, interviewed by author.

The advice given by most of the participants was to pray and seek support from other women preachers. Rev. Tonya Nooks states:

I believe they should find a network of women ministers to support you. They don't have to be in the same denomination. I have some women ministers that share some of the disappointments, disrespect, etc. They can identify what I have gone through.³¹

Rev. Gloria Dillon had this advice to share.

I would tell them to fast and pray and diligently seek God. They should seek God in such a way that God makes things plane for them. I have a friend that goes from church to church and denomination to denomination seeking the approval of men. She has been running from her calling for 30 years. Until she says yes to the Lord, she is not going to find peace.³²

6. If you feel that women are not considered fairly for positions of leadership in the black Baptist church, do you feel that the treatment in the church effects how those women will participate in the black community? Why or why not?

This question addresses the focus of the peer group, cross cultural communication and urban development. The Black community can be affected by the treatment of its people. Since we are concerned about the development of the community, whether it is urban or suburban, we were concerned about the answers to this question. There was variation on the answer to this question. Some felt that it could affect them in the community, while others did not feel that it would affect them negatively. It was felt that some would use their gifts in the community, when they could not use them in the church. Most of the participants sated that it depended upon the person.

Rev. Allyson Abrams states:

³¹ Tonya Nooks, interviewed by author.

³² Gloria Dillon, interviewed by author.

It really depends on the person. The strong individual can handle that better. A person that is not that strong and is wounded, may be angry at others. They may take out their anger on others and the pastor. Some people just pop wherever they are. You may go off on somebody in the grocery store. The stronger people will not be as quick to be angry. It will affect how they would act in the community and be supportive of new business, etc.³³

Rev. Kisha Williams shares how the person may be affected.

It will affect the way you participate in the community. If you are not accepted, it hurts your self-esteem. You don't go forth with confidence. There is a lack of love. People are not showing that love, so it is difficult to show love to others outside of the church.³⁴

7. What do you feel could be done to help the communication process concerning women preachers?

All of the participants felt that there needed to be more communication. Rev.

Brenda Thomas was not optimistic that communication is going to improve right away.

She states:

I don't expect communication to improve right now. It will happen as the demographics change. Many are happy with the way things are structured. They aren't going to change things. Many of the women don't appear to want to communicate. Here you are having this project. None of the women are coming forth with this project. Some time, women need to just not show up on Sunday. That would cause the issue to be on the table.³⁵

Rev. Jerrie McGill shared that women have the power to force communication through their numbers and finances. She states:

I believe that if women in the black Baptist church would close their pocketbooks for one month, the issue would be resolved. Women are going to have to pull out of the convention to have

³³ Allyson Abrams, interviewed by author.

³⁴ Kisha Williams, interviewed by author.

³⁵ Brenda Thomas, interviewed by author.

conferences on the issue. They probably won't do that. There is a woman's organization in the NBC that provides leadership positions. I don't know how appealing that is to young people. I do not participate in the NBC in any way. Some women in my church appear to be satisfied with the women's organization.³⁶ Rev. Jerrie McGill was referring to the Women's Auxiliary of NBC, Inc.

8. Share with me how it feels to be a woman in the black Baptist church that has been called by God to preach or hold a leadership position.

I believe those that might read this report need to hear the answer to this question from all of the participants. Following is a review of what each respondent had to say about how they felt as a woman preacher in the black Baptist church. We begin with Rev. Marjorie Warden. She stated:

It's a ministry and service. I have a position of leadership in a hospital in the trauma unit. I get a chance to serve. Whenever I am in that capacity, God has anointed me to do it. I give it all that I have. I let the Holy Spirit use me. It has been very effective.³⁷

Rev. Amy Nooks states:

At First Baptist, it is difficult, because some of the women don't receive women preachers. It is a fight in the church to do what you have been called to do. I also believe that there are some that receive the word from a women. It is difficult when people won't receive what you have to say. It is fulfilling, because you are being obedient. I believe the body of Christ needs to be more accepting of women preachers in the black Baptist church. I believe that God is breaking down barriers. Keep on doing what God would have you to do even if the people don't accept you.³⁸

Rev. Tonya Nooks states:

³⁶ Jerrie McGill, interviewed by author.

³⁷ Marjorie Warden, interviewed by author.

³⁸ Amy Nooks, interviewed by author.

It has been a good training experience. If you ever had any doubts about your relationship with God, you will be sifted. There is a heavy burden that goes along with the consequences. You are ostracized, belittled, assassinated, etc. People will do what they can to discourage you. You have to keep serving. You have to answer the call. If you don't do what God has called you to do, you will dry up. God calls whom he wants to call. If God calls me, I am honored. If I fail to do what God has called me to do, it is my responsibility.³⁹

Rev. Ramee Linton shared:

At First Baptist, it was scary, because of the controversy. I know that I am a minister and that God has called me. At First Baptist, I feel not wanted. I feel that there is not a point to stand up and preach. I don't feel comfortable talking to some of the people at First Baptist. I have gone to other churches, and I was accepted more at those churches. I enjoy being a minister. I love to help people. It is only by the grace of God that I can do anything.⁴⁰

Rev. Meylon Clark, who is no longer in the Baptist church shares how it felt being a part of the Baptist church.

It was a feeling of sadness, because of the rejection. It was like, God you called me to such an awesome task. I was a homemaker, and you called me to preach. I stood at a crossroad. I was trying to figure out how to get there, when I am surrounded by people that are opposed to me getting there. I was no longer Meylon Clark the homemaker. I was Meylon Clark the pastor, the preacher and the community leader. God began to strengthen my confidence in Him, not in Meylon. The call was really not about me. I look at the call as a place of honor that no man can take from me. It is a place where only God can keep me. It blows my mind when I think about where God has called me to be.⁴¹

Rev. Allyson Abrams expressed how it felt to be a women preacher in the black Baptist church. She had a different perspective, because she is a part of the

³⁹ Tonya Nooks, interviewed by author.

⁴⁰ Ramee Linton, interviewed by author.

⁴¹ Mayon Clark, interviewed by author.

Progressive Baptist Convention, and her pastor is supportive of women preachers.

She states:

My experience would be a little different. I came out of the Metropolitan Baptist Church. H. Beecher Hicks was my pastor. He has women in leadership positions. I was blessed to find a church in Ohio and Michigan where I could use my gifts. I taught classes and was able to preach on Sundays. I have been blessed to use my gifts. I preached at the Baptist pastors counsel in Detroit, Michigan. I am happy about being a black woman pastor in the black Baptist church. I am excited about preaching. My gift has made room for me. God is opening doors for me. When I did not get a church, I was disappointed, and I know that it was because I am a woman.⁴²

Rev. Brenda Thomas is concerned that the church is not meeting the needs of the people.

The church is not responding to what is going on outside of its doors. There are churches on every corner. Maybe it seems that the problems are just too big or too much. Traditional means are not working. We spend a lot of time building our legacies.⁴³

Rev. Jerrie McGill would like to be recognized at other churches. She states:

I would love to be recognized at other churches. I choose not to go to churches except to those that accept women preachers. In my own church, I am very active. I have not had the opportunity to baptize anybody, yet. I have learned so much as a result of my own pastor's leadership that I feel comfortable conducting services. If I were called tonight to take a leadership role in a church, I know that I am ready. I would submit to you that it is not that much better in other denominations. There are problems in other churches as well. I have sisters in the AME and Presbyterian churches. I don't see it as much in some other churches.⁴⁴

Rev. Kisha Williams expressed that she felt uncomfortable in the church.

⁴² Allyson Abrams, interviewed by author.

⁴³ Brenda Thomas, interviewed by author.

⁴⁴ Jerrie McGill, interviewed by author.

I felt uncomfortable. When I was back in the black Baptist church, you had to fight so much to get up and share a word from God. There is a battle within yourself, because you are afraid of the repercussions. The church is so judgmental, and they are not embracing. The church is too traditional. This is not just a problem in the Baptist church. I feel the church has suffered. I feel we have gotten so far off track. Not only women but also young people have gifts. God can use everybody to serve his purpose. God wants to minister to people that are hurting. A person that is on the brink of suicide can be reached by anyone.⁴⁵

Rev. Gloria Dillon shared:

It's exciting and scary, but it is something that I have to do. The first time that I preached, I knew that it was what I was supposed to do. I love to serve the Lord. It was like a child coming home. I have been blessed with many gifts. I was suppose to tell others about Jesus. It is an awesome thing and a humbling thing. God could have chosen somebody else, but God chose me.⁴⁶

Rev. Sarah Harris states:

I feel blessed of the Lord to be called, and I feel responsible for really studying God's word so that I will rightly divide His word of truth.⁴⁷

Conference on Women Preachers Field Experience

The conference was designed to assist in the communication process. The major goal of the conference was to get the issue of women preachers on the table. Churches were invited in the Dayton, Springfield, and Xenia, Ohio areas. A notice about the conference was published in the *Xenia Daily Gazette*.

⁴⁵ Kisha Williams, interviewed by author.

⁴⁶ Gloria Dillon, interviewed by author.

⁴⁷ Sarah Harris interviewed by author.

There were evening worship services on August 13 and 14, 2004 at 7:00 P.M. Rev. Dr. Robert Baines, Jr. delivered the message on Friday, while Rev. Dr. Ella Mitchell delivered the message on Saturday. Pastor Allyson Abrams delivered the message on Sunday, August 15, 2004 at the morning worship service at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The worship services highlighted the gifts of women preachers. Rev. Brenda Thomas and Rev. Gloria Dillon were the respective worship leaders for Friday and Saturday evening. Rev. Amy Nooks lead praise and worship for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. She also sang a solo on Saturday night. Rev. Kima Cunningham also sang a solo on Saturday evening.

The teaching portion of the conference was held on Saturday, August 14, 2004 from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Again the gifts of women preachers were highlighted. Rev. Dr. Jerrie McGill was one of the teachers, while Rev. Kima Cunningham and Pastor Ethyl Munlin were panelists. Rev. Marva Hughes was to be one of the panel members, but she could not attend, because of illness in her family. Male preachers were involved in every aspect of the conference as well. Dr. Larry George was one of the teachers, while DR. Junior Greenlee and Pastor John Cunningham served as panelists. Dr. Charles Brown was unable to attend because of a conflict in his schedule. The balance of women and men preachers was planned to encourage participation from all participants.

Pastor Nooks introduced the teachers for the conference, Dr. Jerrie McGill and Dr. Larry George. He advised the participants that a class-pack had been assembled which contained pertinent information about women preachers.

The interview session featured Dr. George interviewing Dr. McGill and Dr. McGill interviewing Dr. George. R. McGill and Dr. George shared information about

their lives and ministry. Both Dr. McGill and Dr. George have PhD's, they are both ordained, and they have both been called. Yet Dr. George has had more opportunities to preach and serve than has Dr. McGill. Dr. McGill preaches about four times a year.

Dr. George stated that he had been against women in ministry. He felt that it was his job, along with his pastor's, to keep the ministry pure of women. In the first year of seminary, he understood sin as informed oppression. That changed his ministry. When he got to San Francisco Seminary he began to study the text concerning women preachers in the original languages. He understood sexism and racism. He understood that women had been oppressed and treated differently. Dr. George stated that he understood that as a man he had privileges over women.

Dr. McGill stated that she had expected to be accepted in the Baptist church. She was taken aback when she was not. She had come from a Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, and AME background into the Baptist church. Dr. McGill will, often, not travel with her home church, Tabernacle Baptist, when they visit a church that does not acknowledge women preachers.

Dr. McGill advised of an avenue that some women preachers could take to aid them. She shared that she had a study group that met at her house for one year that helped confirm her calling. When Dr. McGill acknowledged her call, her pastor said, "Who am I to say that you have not been called."

There were some significant issues that were raised during the conference. Following is a listing of some of the discussion that took place.

Dr. Greenlee expressed a concern that there was no representation of those that were opposed to the support of women preachers. He expressed that he wanted to

discuss the Bible. Rev. Schooler also expressed a similar desire for the biblical references to be addressed. Dr. George stated that the conference was designed to express experiences prior to getting into the scriptures.

He stated that the Bible is a “slam dunk” case for women in ministry. He stated that there is a problem with the Pastorals. Dr. George stated that he wanted to start with Genesis. There are two stories of the creation. One is older than the other. According to the principle of hermeneutics the first story sets the precedence. God created male and female and gave them dominance over the earth. The Bible does not say that God gave one gender dominance over the other.

Dr. George stated that he was not going to elaborate verse by verse. He didn’t believe he had the time. Dr. George stated the precedence had been set in Genesis 1. In Genesis 2 you have another story (the J Story). The Genesis 1 story is a priestly story. The priests gave men and women equal status. The Genesis story is more primitive.

In the Pastoral Epistles, they begin with Genesis 2. Rev. Schooler asked about Genesis 3. Dr. George stated that Genesis 1-11 is called an etiological myth. We should not be thrown off by the term myth. It was written to tell the story to children. Genesis 3, the fall, tried to explain in a teaching format to children. The text says that Adam and Eve were together in the fall, while the Pastorals places the fall of humanity upon the woman.

Rev. Schooler explained that he believed Genesis 3 because the Bible says that men shall have dominion over women. Rev. Schooler stated that he didn’t come to the conference to fight. He wanted to know if there were any validity to Genesis 3 pertaining to structure. Dr. George stated that Genesis 3 is ideal. He stated that the curse happened

before the Law. If it happened before the law, it shouldn't matter at all. Will we forgive humanity of all sin except when a woman tries to lead. All other curses were reversed.

Rev. Greenlee and Rev. Schooler stated the hierarchy of the Bible. Dr. George stated that the hierarchy came from the culture and was dragged into the church. Christ said no longer call me master. Call me friend. Jesus smashed the hierarchy.

Rev. Greenlee asked what did Dr. George use to base his decision to take some scripture out and leave others. Dr. George stated "slaves obey your masters" and asked if he felt that that scripture still applies. Dr. George stated that that scripture came out of culture.

Rev. Schooler said that he didn't come to change the Law and that we should love one another. Dr. George asked if there can be love, where there is control. Rev. Schooler said that love establishes control. Dr. George said that he was talking about a bond servant. Rev. Schooler said that he was a bond servant to Christ and raised the question, "aren't all of us?"

A question was asked about Ephesians 4, where it says, "He gave some..." The participant asked what this meant pertaining to preaching. Dr. George said that there is not designation of gender to the gifts of the spirit. Mary Magdalene was given a commission to teach the other apostles. Once you are given a gift it is for the up building of the body of Christ.

Rev. Greenlee mentioned that there are some words that automatically refer to the male or female gender. Dr. George asked if Dr. Greenlee was trying to suggest that all of the words that are in the masculine only refer to men, and was he implying that women cannot have gifts? Dr. George stated that gender in the Greek does not mean that it only

refers to one gender. You cannot make the argument that words written in the masculine are only for men. Then, a discussion incurred about Deborah and the role she played as a Judge of Israel.

The comment was made that we all have a different calling. We are to come together in Christ. A discussion incurred about being called and the inability of the one that is called to shake the calling. The comment was made that we must answer God's call. It doesn't matter what others say. The commenter stated that she was sick for a year, but when she acknowledge her call she was healed.

A participant stated that we need to move on when we have differences. The arguing is not productive. It was stated that the gifts of the Spirit are to be utilized. Some people need to hear the message that a woman may have. There is no limit on the use of the five-fold ministry that God has laid out. The gifts are genderless. The Spirit was poured out on men and women. A discussion ensued about the Spirit being poured out on all flesh. It was pointed out that there are different jobs for the different sexes.

The panel discussion occurred after lunch. The panelists were Pastor Munlin, Pastor Cunningham, Rev. Kima Cunningham, and Pastor Greenlee.

There was a discussion about the order in the church. Dr. Greenlee defended the position of order in the church that is traditionally understood from the Pastorals. Pastor Munlin stated that God is a Spirit and God's Spirit is poured out upon all flesh. She quoted Galatians 3:28. Dr. Greenlee pointed out that Galatians 3:28 referred to salvation only. He also pointed out that prophecy is not preaching, in reference to Joel.

Dr. George asked Pastor Cunningham to explain his statement that all Christians are called. Pastor Cunningham expressed there needs to be a reformation in the licensing

process. Everybody is not called to preach. People should be licensed according to what their calling is. Pastor Cunningham believes that we need to review the ordination process, because we are called to different ministries.

Pastor Ernest Brown raised the question of defining generic preaching to the world and the gift of preaching. Pastor Cunningham remained with his position of people having different callings. Dr. Greenlee referred to a generic preaching and specific preaching. Pastor Munlin referred to the gifts of the Spirit and the pouring out of God's Spirit upon all flesh. Rev. Cunningham expounded upon the fact that while there is a generic preaching there is a specific gift of preaching. This gift is not limited to the pulpit. Pastor Cunningham expounded upon the fact that people have different gifts. Everybody is not called to be a pastor. We should not be caught up with a hierarchy in the church.

Rev. Sylvia Mosley stated that she had been called to a prison ministry. If the calling is taken from the women, who will minister to the prisoners? Pastor Cunningham stated that too much importance had been placed on the position of pastor. If you're not a pastor, you're nothing. He made the statement to imply that it is wrong to only look to the position of pastor. There are other callings. Dr. Greenlee stated that in the church setting 1 Timothy 2 was to be followed. In an evangelistic setting anybody can preach.

Rev. Mosley asked where the difference was at between a man and a woman when it comes to preaching. Dr. Greenlee expressed that there was a difference in the licensing process in the church. Pastor Munlin stated that no one can say what God has given somebody. The Holy Spirit does the anointing. It is the power of God, it doesn't have anything to do with gender. Rev. Cunningham stated that we must consider the

context when we interpret scripture. The situation in Corinth was a church that was out of order. Priscilla taught Apollos. She didn't evangelize him. If we try to determine who God is calling and what God can do with people, we will not see the kingdom of God.

Dr. George raised the issue of women pastors. Pastor Brown asked about the fall and raised the issue of an interpretation of Genesis. Rev. Cunningham explained that there are different interpretations of Genesis 1 and 2. We are to operate in partnership. We no longer operate under the Law, but under grace. Christ's death on the cross washed away sins. Pastor Cunningham expressed that we are not going to get back to the pre-fall state until after we die. He explained that women are still having pain in child bearing. We are striving to get to the pre-fall state, but we are not there. Dr. Greenlee expressed that there was male leadership before the fall and after the fall.

I don't believe anyone changed their opinion as a result of attending the conference. However, I feel that people were better informed about the issue of women preachers. There were not many people present that expressed, openly, that they were opposed to women preachers. It is difficult to get dialog on this issue. I am grateful for the dialog that we had.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

The field experience was educational for me. There is a lot of indifference on the part of men concerning the issue of women preachers. I perceive that many are like the white people that can't understand why Blacks are concerned about bias or prejudice. If the issue is not affecting the person, they tend to treat it lightly.

There appears to be very few people that will take a stand, openly, against women preachers. However, many men and women will not support women preachers privately. I respect those people that will take a position on the issue, whether it is in opposition to or support of women preachers. Those that purport one position in the presence of one audience, and conveniently change that position or become quiet on the issue in another audience impede the progress in communication and action.

From the limited data that I was able to gather, I believe that many congregants are in support of women preachers. However, it is not always politically expedient for pastors to express support. The majority of the congregants are either indifferent or silent. Many don't feel that they know enough about the issue to take a position. I hope that those that read this report will be aided in their decision making process.

I was moved by the interviews. I do not believe any man can, adequately, express how women who are called to preach feel, when they are denied a venue to manifest their call. I could feel, to some extent, the pain that all of the participants experienced. Some

appeared to have experienced hurt that could be debilitating and cause one to run from the church. I was encouraged by the strength of each interviewee that said that they loved being a preacher and working for the Lord.

The issue of women seeking validation from men intrigued me. There are more women in the church and they contribute more money than men do. One of the participants expressed the fact that women have the power, in the pocketbooks, to force a discussion about the issue. But, all women would not be supportive of women preachers. There are still Blacks that seek validation from whites.

I would like to have had more people take the survey. With more data a quantitative analysis could have been conducted. I believe the figures would surprise many. I believe that the congregants are more accepting of women preachers, but they are, often, not heard.

Using First Baptist in Yellow Springs as an example, the majority of the people are supportive of women preachers. Yet, many of those that are supportive wound up leaving the church, because of the perception that they were fighting a losing battle. I would like to suggest that many don't even begin to wage a battle or state an opinion. The church needs to hear from different voices. Just as academia needed to hear different voices, the local church needs to hear from everybody.

By hearing from different voices, we can begin to build community from the inside out. The Black community and the NBC, Inc. will begin to move toward true community when all people participate. I believe the Black community and the Black church need to celebrate the gifts that God has given the church. Our efforts to help the

needy and to reach the lost can only be enhanced by utilizing all of the gifts of men and women. Every person is important to God and to the community that they are a part of.

The data gathered would suggest that there is a greater support for women preachers than some believe. However, it is difficult to rely on that assumption, because there is not enough data to support the assumption. Dr. Greenlee stated that there needed to be more balanced representation in the teaching and discussion. I agree with his assessment. Yet, it is very difficult to get people that might disagree to sit down at the table together to address issues.

The surveys, the conference and the interviews did help to get the issue on the table. In support of the peer focus area, the project helped to enhance the communication within the Black community and the black Baptist church. Many participants also supported the claim that the way women are treated in the black Baptist church affects the Black community. The gifts of many women preachers in the black Baptist church were celebrated, but we have a long way to go.

Following is a listing of some things that can be accomplished to further the cause of celebrating the gifts that God has given to women to preachers in the black Baptist church.

1. Conduct more conferences on the issue of women preachers.
2. Publish articles in periodicals and newspapers about the issue of women preachers.
3. Get a training session on the agenda in congresses of Christian education at the local, regional, state and national levels in conventions.

4. Encourage dialog in the local churches. Provide a venue that is not intimidating, where people can express openly without retribution.
5. Encourage and help develop support groups for women preachers.
6. Develop a training manual and conduct sessions in various venues, like local churches and conventions.

While this document focused on an interpretation of scripture as the ground for controversy regarding the issue of women preachers, there may be other grounds for the controversy. I believe the perception that black men and women were given by the majority culture and the one that they may have of themselves, can affect how we treat each other (men and women). The woman was given the stamp of either a temptress or a mule. Creating the perception of a black woman being sexually promiscuous or a superwoman. These roles were assigned by the majority culture to explain why the white man may have impregnated the black woman. The blame for being rapes, could then, be placed on the black woman. The black woman labored in the fields with the black man, shattering the traditional role of womanhood in which the white woman lived. Being a super woman could help the majority culture explain assigning the black woman to arduous tasks that were, generally, accomplished by the man.

For further investigations into the issue of women preachers, the issue of relationships between black men and women should be understood more clearly. I suggest researching other resources and scholars like: *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities* by Johnetta Betsch Cole, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, *Men & Society* by Clyde W. Franklin, *If It Wasn't for the Women* by Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism* by Bell

Hooks, *The Social Teaching of the Black Churches* by Peter J. Paris, *Introduction To Black Church History*, and *The Black Church in the Post-Civil Rights Era* by Anthony B. Pinn, *The American Black Male: His Present Status and His Future* by G. Major Richards, and Jacob U. Gordon, *Plenty Good Room* by Marcia Riggs, *Gender Ethnicity & Religion* by Rosemary Radford Ruether, and *Relational Refugees: Alienation and Reincorporation in African American Churches and Communities* by Edward P. Wimberly.

If I had the opportunity, there are some things that I would have done differently. There should have been more advertisement concerning the conference on women preachers. While the local newspaper was used to advertise the conference, the radio and cable television stations could have been used as vehicles to advertise the conference. I could have attended more churches to discuss the conference with congregants, face-to-face. The association and district meetings held prior to the conference could have also been used.

Dr. Junior Greenlee commented that there should have been more people involved, in the conference, that were not supportive of women preachers. I agree with Dr. Greenlee. I made several attempts to contact and involve more pastors that I felt were in opposition to women preachers. However, I did not engage as many as I would have liked to.

The technical set-up for the conference should have been planned better. More operators and a check of the equipment would have provided better taping. The sound system failed and the focus on the video camera was not adjusted properly for all the sessions.

I would have liked to interview more women preachers. While I was able to interview eleven women preachers, I feel that the impact of interviewing more would have been significant. The experiences that the women shared can be an effective tool in communicating the issues associated with recognizing women preachers. I believe that videotaping would have been more effective.

I should have involved the context associates more in communicating their opinions. While several meetings were held with the context associates, many of them were unable to attend regularly. Several of the context associates did not fill out the survey. If time would have allowed it, I would have had more one-on-one meetings with the context associates.

I wanted to interview more preachers, male and female. I believe the responses of the preachers to the issue of recognizing the gifts that God has given to women preachers is critical to health and growth of the church. The preachers are influential in the black community.

I began this project believing that I had “the answer.” I believed, as I still believe, that many women that are called, by God, to preach, are not treated fairly in the black Baptist church or the church, in general. God gives gifts, and people’s opinions are not to supersede God’s call.

Owen C. Thomas and Elken K. Wondra define theology as “faith seeking understanding” and “faith seeking purpose.”¹ Working on this project helped to enlightened me about the depth of the importance of the issue of whether a woman should preach or not. This issue is profound in the lives of many Christians. Talking

¹ Owen C. Thomas and Elken K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology*, Third Edition (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 1.

with many people caused my faith to seek understanding concerning the importance of tradition in the lives of many of God's people.

Traditionally women have not preached in many churches, and the suggestion that they might preach can cause controversy with a body of believers. Such was the case at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. As a result of my stand in support of women preachers, many members stopped attending service. There were movements to oppose the women that were licensed in the church. Although I was hurt by the actions of some of the members, my faith seeking understanding helped me to see that the opposition to women preachers may have been borne out of a legitimate belief that women are not to preach. One person's reality does not have to be the same as another person's. Although I disagree with an interpretation of scripture that subjugates women preachers, I still love my sisters and brothers in Christ that hold to the belief that scripture or tradition dictate that women are not to preach.

My faith seeking purpose moved me to take a stand for the cause of women preachers. Even though I experienced pain from taking a stand, I knew that I had to stand. The greatest pain that I felt was experiencing Christians hurting other Christians. In the midst of the controversy, it was, often, difficult to see the love of Christ manifested. Not only did those that oppose women preaching slow down their attendance and giving, but so did those that were in support of women preachers. It seemed that every body was losing. The pain of trying to come together became unbearable for some. Going through the pain of conflict resulting from a stand for women preachers in a church that had never had women preachers, I have gained an appreciation for those that don't take a stand. The results can be catastrophic to the health of the body. My faith seeking

purpose knew that I had to make a stand, but it seemed unfair to engage a congregation in a stand that I had to take.

I no longer pastor at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. My other job relocated me to Canada. The women that were licensed in the church have left First Baptist. Reflecting on my stand, as painful as the experience was, I would do it again. Yet, I have come to appreciate that my purpose is not the same as another person's purpose.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY

Survey on Women Preachers

1. Name: _____

2. Age: 0-12 _____
 13-17 _____
 18-21 _____
 22-30 _____
 31-40 _____
 41-60 _____
 60 + _____

3. Gender: Male _____
 Female _____

Church:

4. Name _____ Location _____

5. Convention _____

6. Member for _____ Years

7. Offices Held _____

8. Did you transfer from another denomination? _____

9. Name of the denomination transferred from _____

10. If you transferred, why did you transfer? _____

11. Do you believe women should be preachers?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

12. Do you believe women should be pastors?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

13. Are you familiar with scriptures that are relevant to the issue of women preachers?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

14. Should women teach men in the church?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

15. Should women sing in the choirs in the church?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

16. Should women read announcements in the church?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

17. Should women lead a ministry in the church?

Yes _____

No _____

Unknown _____

18. Could limiting the contributions of women in the black Baptist church, by denying them the right to preach or hold other leadership positions affect the black community? Why?

James A. Nooks

June 24, 2004

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions for Women Preachers

1. Do you believe that the black Baptist church considers women fairly for positions of leadership in the church, i.e. pastors, preachers, deacons, ministers, etc.? Why?
2. Share with me what you believe to be the ideal position the black Baptist church should take concerning the issue of women holding leadership positions like those mentioned above?
3. As a woman that has been called to preach or hold a leadership position in the church, how does the position that the black Baptist church has taken concerning women in leadership positions affect you?
4. Should women that are called to preach, leave the black Baptist church, if they are not afforded the opportunity to exercise the gifts that they have been given? What advice would you give women that decide to leave?
5. What advice would you give to women that decide to stay in the black Baptist church that have been called to preach or hold other leadership positions?
6. If you feel that women are not considered fairly for positions of leadership in the black Baptist church, do you feel that the treatment in the church effects how those women will participate in the black community? Why or why not?
7. What do you feel could be done to help the communication process concerning women preachers?
8. Share with me how it feels to be a woman in the black Baptist church that has been called by God to preach or hold a leadership position.

James A. Nooks

June 24, 2004

APPENDIX C
INVITATION LETTER

June 24, 2004

Rev. Andrew Gardner;

I bring you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. My name is James A. Nooks. I am the pastor of First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio. I am writing to you about the project that I have undertaken to complete the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree at United Theological Seminary. My project focuses on women preachers in the black church. My specific focus is the black Baptist church.

I feel the issue of women in ministry, preaching, and pastoring needs to be discussed in the black church. It is an issue that has been at the center of pain, misunderstanding, division and separation. The interpretation of scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, 1 Timothy 2:11-12 and Galatians 3:28 have fueled debate, while tradition and personal preferences have also contributed to lines being drawn on the issue.

A conference has been planned for August 13th and 14th, 2004 at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio to discuss the issue. The conference is planned as a forum to present the different view points on the issue of women preachers to enhance the possibility of people making a more informed decision. The conference will be composed of two worship services and a training session.

I would like to personally invite you to attend this conference. If you can attend any part of the conference, it would be greatly appreciated. Please RSVP by July 30th as to whether you will be able to attend the training session on Saturday, August 14th from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

The teachers for the training session will be Dr. Jerrie McGill, former Superintendent of Schools in Dayton and an associate minister at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Dayton and Dr. Larry George, New Testament scholar and the former Academic Dean of Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce. In order for all to gain from the experience of learning, both men and women are encouraged to be a part of the conference. The training session will culminate with a panel discussion that will include the following participants: Rev. Dr. John Cunningham (Mt. Enon Baptist), Rev. Marva Hughes Omega Baptist), Dr. Junior Greenlee (Zion Hill Baptist), Rev. Kima Cunningham (Mt. Enon Baptist), Dr. Charles Brown (Bethel Baptist), and Pastor Ethyl Munlin (Harvest Time Christian Center).

There will be worship services on Friday and Saturday, August 13th and 14th, 2004 at 7:00 P.M. Rev. Dr. Robert Baines, Jr. will deliver the message on Friday, and Rev. Dr. Ella Mitchell will bring the message on Saturday.

Please bring any material that you have written or would encourage others to use in addressing the subject of women preachers to this conference, to help us learn from one another.

My prayer is that we come to the conference ready to listen to all perspectives, and receive what God has for us. An agenda of the conference is attached with this letter. Light refreshments will be served from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 A.M. during the registration period on August 14th. There will be a light lunch served on Saturday, August 14th at a cost of \$5 per person.

Your servant,

Pastor James A. Nooks
5704 Victorian Way
Springfield, Ohio 45503

1 Attachment - Agenda

937-342-9347
937-360-3397

APPENDIX D
MAIL LIST FOR CONFERENCE

1. Allyson D. Nelson Abrams, 13901 Kenwood St., Oak Park, MI 48237
2. Roland Bailey Jr., 10704 N. Council Rd. # 9, Oklahoma City, OK 73162
3. Andrew Jackson Gardner, 13451 West 105th Terrace, Overland Park, KS 66215
4. Brenda L. Thomas, 231 Woodbury Drive, Dayton, OH 45415
5. Margie Warden, 432 South 98th Street, Edwardsville, KS 66111
6. Ronald J. W. Wells, 51 Ridge Road, Wheatley Heights, NY 11798
7. Johnny M. Wilson Jr., 1347 South Branch Pkwy, Springfield, Mass 01129
8. Byron J. Grayson, Sr., 1018 Eastbourne Court, Frederick, MD 21702
9. Dr. Robert C. Walker, 4516 College View Dr., Dayton, OH 45427
10. Dee Dee Coleman, 21970 Ridgedale, Oak Park, MI 48237
11. Meylon T. Clark, 2721 Tenth Avenue, Columbus, GA 31904
12. Dr. Linda E. Thomas, Lutheran School of Chicago, 1100 E. 55th Street, Chicago IL 60615
13. Rick Hunter, 5460 Lindsey Lane, Cypress CA 90630
14. Sheila Brown, 19200 Tireman Street, Detroit, MI 48228
15. Rev. Kima Cunningham, 6 Mario Dr., Trotwood, Ohio 45426
16. Rev. Lynel Beatty, 609 Ridegdale Road, Dayton, Ohio 45406
17. Rev. Gloria Dillon, 1139 Glen Kegley Drive, Xenia, Ohio 45385
18. Rev. Cynthia King, 1241 Red Bluff Dr., Apt. A, West Carrollton, Ohio 45449
19. Rev. Joan Lindsey, 4992 Hacket Dr., Dayton, Ohio 45418
20. Pastor Ethel Munlin, Harvest Time Christ Center, 4372 Hoover Ave., Dayton, Ohio
21. Rev. Carlton Williams, 712 Broad Oak Drive, Trotwood, Ohio 45426
22. Rev. Jerard M. Wilson, 2324 Rustic Road, Dayton, Ohio 45406
23. Rev. Thurman Sampson, 1522 Cory Drive, Dayton, Ohio 45406

24. Rev. Ernest Brown, St. John MB Church, 3400 W. Pleasant St., Springfield, Ohio 45506
25. Rev. Dr. Donald Thompson, Tabernacle Baptist Church, 380 S. Broadway St., Dayton, Ohio 45407
26. Rev. Leroy Stills, Middlerun Baptist Church, 1000 E. Church St., Xenia, Ohio 45385
27. Rev. Dr. William E. Harris, Zion Baptist Church, 1684 Earlham, Dayton, Ohio 45406
28. Rev. Gary Chapman, Zion Baptist Church, 565 E. Main St., Xenia, Ohio 45385
29. Rev. Dr. Junior Greenlee, Zion Hill Baptist Church, 1400 W. Dr. MLK Way, Dayton, Ohio 45417
30. Rev. Dr. Charles Brown, Bethel Baptist Church, 401 S. Paul Laurence Dunbar St., Dayton, Ohio 45407
31. Rev. Joseph Young, First Baptist, 63 W. Fourth St., London, Ohio 43140
32. Rev. Joel King, Jr., Jerusalem Baptist church, 1036 S. High St., Urbana, Ohio 43078
33. Rev. Samuel Winston, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, 3300 Dr. MLK Way, Dayton, Ohio 45417
34. Rev. Warren Shaw, Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, 345 Savannah Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45417
35. Rev. Darryl Grayson, Mt. Zion Baptist church, 1171 S. Yellow Springs St., Springfield, Ohio 45506
36. Rev. Dr. John Cunningham, Mt. Enon Baptist church, 1501 Dr. MLK, Jr. Way, Dayton, Ohio 45407
37. Rev. Dr. Joseph L. Coleman, Canaan Baptist Church, 5191 Hoover Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45427
38. Rev. Selwyn Q. Bachus, Shiloh Baptist Church, 3801 Fairbanks Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45407

39. Rev. Dr. Robert E. Baines, Jr., Macedonia Baptist church, 27 N. Gettysburg Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45417
40. Rev. Dr. Daryl Ward, Omega Baptist Church, 118 Salem Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45406
Dayton, Ohio
41. Rev. Ramona Hunter, Progressive Baptist Church, 4817 W. Third St., Dayton, Ohio 45417
42. Rev. Wilburt Shanklin, Dayton Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, 2130 W. Third St., Dayton, Ohio 45417
43. Rev. Larry Coleman, Restored Life Ministries, 1117 Innisfallen Ave., Springfield, Ohio 45506
44. Rev. Marva Hughes, 5936 Moss Creek Lane, Clayton, Ohio 45315
45. Bishop Marva Mitchell, Revival Center Ministries International, 3011 Willy E. Mitchell Sr. Way, Dayton, Ohio 45417
46. Rev. Dr. Beverly Martin, Maranatha Christian Fellowship Church, 4501 Wolf Rd. Dayton, Ohio 45416
47. Rev. Dr. Perry Henderson, Corinthian Baptist Church, 700 S. James H. McGee Blvd., Dayton, Ohio 45407
48. Dr. Larry George, 406 Forrest Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45404
49. Dr. John Freeman, 1101 Ortego Dr., Fairborn, Ohio 45304
50. Rev. Dr. Jerrie McGill, 1217 Sunnyview Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45406

APPENDIX E

SCHEDULE FOR CONTEXT AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES

1	Attend Conference (Women Empowered to Embrace Change)	April 1-3, 2004
2	Context Associate Meeting (Understanding the Project)	13-Mar-04
3	Context Associate Meeting (Understanding the Controversy)	17-Apr-04
4	Attend Meeting of Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and Coalition (IMAC) in Dayton	20-Mar-04
5	Meeting with Professional associates (Training)	21-Apr-04
6	Meetings with Professional Associates	March – May, 2004
7	Context Associate Meeting (Biblical Review; Review Draft Training Outline)	15-May-04
8	Context Associate Meeting (Historical Review)	19-Jun-04
9	"Attend Conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (Baptist Women Clergy)"	Cancelled by Leaders of Conference
10	Surveys to Churches and Interviewees	March – August, 2004
11	Conduct Interviews	June – December, 2004
12	Develop Training Outline	May, 2004
13	Training Outline Developed and Discussed with Context Associates	10-Jul-04
14	Professional Associate Meeting (Review Training Plan)	July 17, 2004; Dr. McGill and Dr. George
15	Develop Training Plan	May-July, 2004
16	Advertise for Training	July – August, 2004
17	Training Session Women's Conference	August 13-15, 2004
18	Collect and Evaluate Data from Surveys and Interviews.	May - November, 2004
19	Outline Paper	November, 2004
20	Write Paper	November, 2004 – January, 2005
21	Edit Paper	January – February, 2005
22	Have Paper Edited and Bound	February - March, 2005
23	Submit Paper	3-Mar-05
24	Defend Paper	18-Mar-05

APPENDIX F
COMPARISON BY GENDER

Question#	#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			#17			#18	
	Women Preachers			Women Pastors			Fam with Scip			Tech Min			Sing in Choir			Amount			Lead Min			Community	
Church	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N
Mt Zion																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	98%	0%	7%	67%	13%	20%	33%	33%	33%	98%	0%	7%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	85%	0%	13%	98%	7%
Female	88%	4%	12%	77%	8%	15%	54%	31%	15%	92%	4%	4%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	98%	4%	0%	100%	0%
Mt Zion	88%	2%	10%	78%	7%	17%	49%	38%	13%	88%	3%	8%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	92%	3%	5%	98%	7%
Kansas City																							
Asst. Pastor	X						X	X		X			X			X			X				
Male	67%	17%	17%	50%	33%	17%	50%	33%	17%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	80%	40%
Female	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Kansas City	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
St. John																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	67%	7%	27%	22%	22%	53%	17%	67%	17%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	88%	7%	10%	63%	24%	12%	70%	28%	5%	98%	0%	5%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
St. John	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%
Conference																							
Male	75%	13%	13%	75%	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	100%	0%	0%	80%	5%	15%	100%	0%	0%	84%	0%	16%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Conference	88%	4%	7%	78%	11%	11%	98%	4%	0%	88%	0%	13%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	98%	0%	4%	98%	5%
Total																							
Male	77%	7%	16%	55%	21%	24%	44%	37%	20%	97%	0%	3%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	95%	0%	5%	91%	9%
Female	88%	4%	8%	72%	13%	13%	72%	21%	7%	92%	1%	7%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	98%	1%	0%	100%	0%
Total	81%	7%	13%	67%	14%	20%	64%	28%	8%	88%	2%	8%	98%	1%	1%	99%	0%	1%	94%	2%	5%	91%	9%
First Baptist																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
Male	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Female	90%	0%	10%	60%	10%	30%	100%	0%	0%	70%	0%	30%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	90%	10%
First Baptist	91%	0%	9%	60%	10%	30%	91%	9%	0%	70%	0%	30%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	90%	0%	10%	89%	13%

* The "X" represents the position of the pastor.

APPENDIX G
COMPARISON BY GENDER DATA

Name	Gender	Women Preach			Women Pastors			Fam. with Scrip			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Min.			Com'ty					
		Question #1	Male	Female	#11	Y	N	#12	Y	N	#13	Y	N	#14	Y	N	#15	Y	N	#16	Y	N	#17	Y	N	#18	Y	N
Mt. Zion (Springfield)																												
Participant #1				1			1				1					1					1					1		
Participant #2				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #3		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #4				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #5				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #6				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #7				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #8				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #9				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #10		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #11				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #12		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #13				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #14				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #15		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #16				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #17				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #18		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #19				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #20				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #21				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #22		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #23				1			1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #24		1					1				1				1						1				1			
Participant #25		1					1				1				1						1				1			

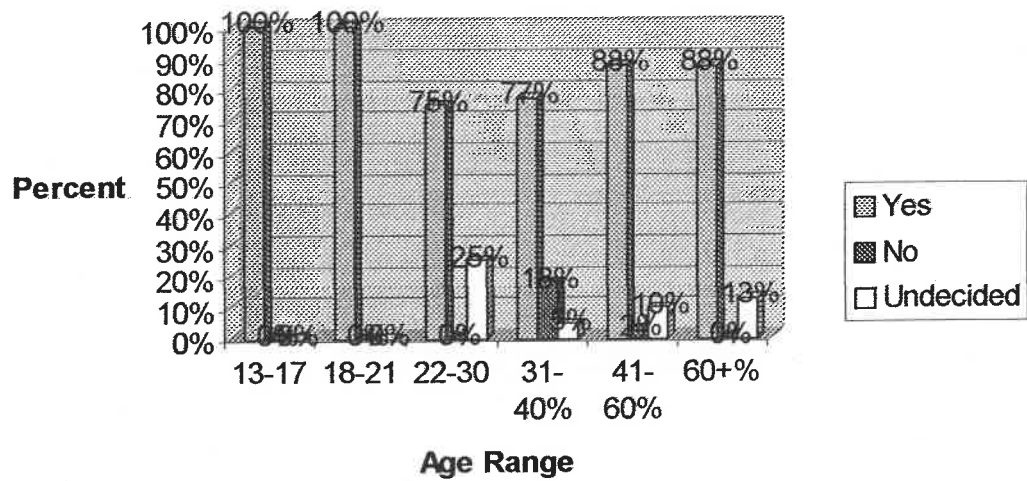
Name	Gender	Women Preach		Women Pastors		Fam. with Scrip		Teach Men		Sing in Choir		Announc.		Lead Min.		Com'ty
Question #1	Male	Female	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18						
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
St. John (Springfield)																
Reva Hutchins		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Linda Strider		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Brenda Kerta		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Patricia Ratchford		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Londa Holliday		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
A. K. Luwnes		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Dorothy Higgenbottom		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Veatrice Smith		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Mary E. Suggs		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Susie Crawford		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Participant #42		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Nuke Jopez		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Mary E. Miller		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
V. Moore		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Brock D. Silbles		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Elizabeth Galloway		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Yvonne Owens		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Patricia Stinnett		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Craig Mulligan		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Hope Gordan		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Betty Todd		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Keith Stinnett		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1
Eric Collins		1		1		1	1		1		1		1		1	1

Name	Gender	Women Preach		Women Pastors		Fam. with Scrip		Teach Men		Sing in Choir		Announc.		Lead Min.		Com'ty	
Question #1	Male	Female	#11	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	Y	N
Brian Stroder	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Donna Freeman																	
Tina				1			1				1			1			
Robert Freeman	1	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Peggy Jones																	
Kateesta Stinnett			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Jessie Shropshire			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Nashua Davis			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Shirley Crawford			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Tina Okishi																	
Stephen Williams	1	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Eugenia Rigglins																	
Vicki Crow			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Joy Worham																	
Christopher Blake			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Kara Hill			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Thomas C. Blake			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Gene Bell			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Brian Keith	1	1		1	1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Mildred Archie			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Mary C. Burley			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Virginia Lewis																	
Melanie Williams			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1
Toleka Thomas			1		1	1		1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1

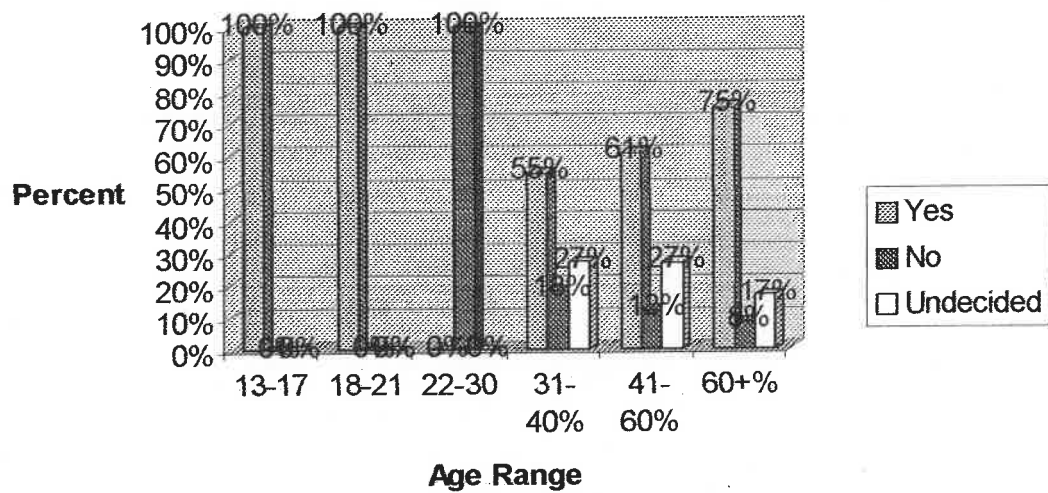
Name	Gender	Women Preach			Women Pastors			Fam. with Scrip			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Mln.			Com'ty		
Question #1		#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			#17			#18		
	Male	Female	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U		
First Baptist (In Conference Numbers)																									
Kisha Williams		1				1			1			1			1			1			1				
Ramee Linton		1																							
Amy Nooks			1			1			1			1			1			1			1				
Anita Pitts				1			1			1			1			1			1			1			
Anita Pitts (After)				1			1			1			1			1			1			1			
Mary G. Simpson					1						1				1				1			1			
Karen Durgans				1			1			1			1			1			1			1			
Karen Durgans (After)			1			1			1			1			1			1			1				
Mary Willett																									
James Nooks		1				1			1			1			1			1			1				
Robyn Henry																									
		1				1			1			1			1			1			1				
			10			10			6			3			10			10			9				
									1						0			0			0				
			0.91			0.13			0.6			0.21			0.91			0			0.9				
									0.07			0.13			0.7			0.023			0.11				
										</															

APPENDIX H
COMPARISON BY AGE

Comaparison By Age (Preachers)



Comaparison By Age (Pastors)



Question #	#11			#12			#13			#14			#15			#16			#17			#18	
	Women Preachers			Women Pastors			Fam. with Scrip.			Teach Men			Sing in Choir			Announc.			Lead Min.			Community	
Church	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N
Mt. Zion																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
13-17																							
18-21	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
22-30	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
31-40%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
41-60%	88%	0%	13%	75%	0%	25%	56%	33%	11%	75%	0%	25%	88%	0%	13%	100%	0%	0%	53%	47%	0%	100%	0%
60+%	82%	0%	18%	71%	11%	18%	43%	43%	14%	86%	4%	11%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	89%	4%	7%	93%	7%
Mt. Zion	88%	2%	10%	76%	7%	17%	49%	38%	13%	89%	3%	8%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	92%	3%	5%	93%	7%
Kansas City																							
Assist. Pastor	X						X	X		X			X			X			X				
13-17																							
18-21																							
22-30																							
31-40%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
41-60%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	75%	0%	25%	100%	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
60+%	67%	0%	33%	67%	0%	33%	67%	33%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Kansas City	75%	13%	13%	50%	13%	8%	63%	25%	13%	100%	0%	0%	88%	13%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	83%	17%
St. John																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
13-17	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
18-21	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
22-30	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
31-40%	73%	20%	7%	40%	20%	40%	53%	47%	0%	65%	0%	35%	93%	0%	7%	93%	0%	7%	100%	0%	0%	93%	7%
41-60%	83%	4%	13%	50%	21%	29%	71%	21%	8%	92%	4%	4%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	96%	0%	4%	96%	4%
60+%	86%	0%	14%	79%	0%	21%	71%	29%	0%	71%	29%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	93%	7%	0%	100%	0%
St. John	72%	10%	17%	58%	19%	23%	58%	33%	9%	89%	4%	7%	98%	0%	2%	98%	0%	2%	94%	2%	4%	89%	11%
Conference																							
13-17																							
18-21	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%
22-30	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%
31-40%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%
41-60%	100%	0%	0%	82%	6%	12%	100%	0%	0%	82%	0%	18%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	94%	0%	6%	94%	6%
60+%	50%	25%	25%	50%	25%	25%	100%	0%	0%	75%	0%	25%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Conference	89%	4%	7%	78%	11%	11%	96%	4%	0%	88%	0%	13%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	96%	0%	4%	95%	5%
Total																							
13-17	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
18-21	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	80%	0%	20%	100%	0%
22-30	75%	0%	25%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	80%	0%	20%	100%	0%
31-40%	77%	18%	5%	55%	18%	27%	64%	36%	0%	75%	0%	25%	95%	0%	5%	95%	0%	5%	81%	0%	19%	91%	9%
41-60%	88%	2%	10%	61%	12%	27%	71%	19%	10%	90%	2%	7%	95%	2%	2%	100%	0%	0%	75%	13%	11%	97%	3%
60+%	88%	0%	13%	75%	8%	17%	65%	27%	8%	85%	2%	13%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	92%	2%	6%	94%	6%
Total	81%	7%	13%	67%	14%	20%	64%	28%	8%	89%	2%	8%	98%	1%	1%	99%	0%	1%	94%	2%	5%	91%	9%
First Baptist																							
Pastor	X			X			X			X			X			X			X			X	
13-17																							
18-21																							
22-30	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
31-40%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%
41-60%	100%	0%	0%	0%	75%	25%	75%	0%	0%	50%	17%	33%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	83%	17%
60+%	100%	0%	0%	50%	0%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%

* The "X" represents the position of the pastor.

APPENDIX I
COMPARISON BY AGE DATA

Name	Age	Women Preaching		Women Pastors		Fam. with Scrip		Teach Men		Sing in Choir		Announc.		Lead Min.		Com'ty	
Question #1		#2		#11		#12		#13		#14		#15		#16		#17	#18
	0-12	13-17	18-21	22-30	31-40	41-60	60+	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y	N	U	Y
Mt. Zion (Springfield)																	
Participant #1								1						1			1
Participant #2								1						1			1
Participant #3								1						1			1
Participant #4								1						1			1
Participant #5								1						1			1
Participant #6								1						1			1
Participant #7								1						1			1
Participant #8								1						1			1
Participant #9								1						1			1
Participant #10								1						1			1
Participant #11								1						1			1
Participant #12								1						1			1
Participant #13								1						1			1
Participant #14								1						1			1
Participant #15								1						1			1
Participant #16								1						1			1
Participant #17								1						1			1
Participant #18								1						1			1
Participant #19								1						1			1
Participant #20								1						1			1
Participant #21								1						1			1
Participant #22								1						1			1
Participant #23								1						1			1
Participant #24								1						1			1
Participant #25								1						1			1

Name	Age											Women Preach		Women Pastor's		Fam. with Scrip		Teach Men		Sing in Choir		Announc.		Lead Min.		Com'ty				
Question #1		#2										#11		#12		#13		#14		#15		#16		#17		#18				
Participant #43	0-12	13-17	18-21	22-30	31-40	41-50	50+	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N			
Shae Callahan					1			1				1				1				1			1		1					
Mrs. Irene Davenport							1		1				1		1				1		1	1		1		1				
Myra R. Blake					1																									
Dian Shropshire						1			1			1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
Nikki Callahan						1						1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
Ernest Brown Sr.						1						1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
Pamela Young						1						1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
Artin Tolliver, Sr.						1						1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
Byron Benning						1						1		1		1			1		1		1		1		1			
	0	1	2	1	15	24	14	42	6	10	33	11	13	33	19	5	48	2	4	53	0	1	53	0	1	51	1	2	33	4
								0.72	0.12	0.19	0.58	0.19	0.2	0.58	0.26	0.09	0.89	0.03	0.07	0.98	0	0.02	0.98	0	0.02	0.94	0.03	0.05	1	0.1

Name	Age	#2					Women Preaching		Women Pastors		Fam. with Scrip		Teach Men		Sing in Choir		Announc.		Lead Min.		Com'ty		
Question #1		0-12	13-17	18-21	22-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Conference																							
Larry George								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Dorothy G.								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Caroline Hollingsworth								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Jerard Wilson								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Sylvia Mosley								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Bryant Graham								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Alicia Williams								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Aaron Henderson				1				1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Veronic M. Sample								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Veronic M. Sample (After)								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Rev. Norman Bradfille								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Rev. Camille Still								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Junior Greenlee								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Karen Durgans								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Karen Durgans (After)								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Mary Willlett								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Lillie Wright								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Rhonda Harris								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Mary G. Simpson								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Anita Pitts								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Anita Pitts (After)								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Gloria Dillon								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Kisha Williams								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Jerrie McGill								1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	

Name	Age																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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APPENDIX J

HOW IS THE BLACK COMMUNITY AFFECTED?

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y N	Why
Mt. Zion (Springfield)		
Participant #1	1	If they do not serve as they have been called in one church, they will go where they can serve.
Participant #2		
Participant #3		
Participant #4		
Participant #5	1	Women have ideas that are useful. They should not be limited.
Participant #6		
Participant #7		
Participant #8	1	The church is to be involved in the community. The black Baptist Church should not discriminate against gender.
Participant #9	1	There are more women than men in the church. Women bring a nurturing and gentle spirit. They bring unity and harmony to the home.
Participant #10		
Participant #11		
Participant #12		
Participant #13		
Participant #14		
Participant #15		
Participant #16		
Participant #17	1	They are part of the make-up of every community, and they should have a voice. Everyone is needed to make a success.
Participant #18		
Participant #19		
Participant #20		
Participant #21		
Participant #22	1	It could work both ways, because of the compassion of a woman and the avenue of the will. Her compassion can overshadow the listening of God's will. It can fill the gap when man willfully walks away from it.
Participant #23		
Participant #24		
Participant #25	1	God is no respecter of persons, whom he qualifies or calls.

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y	N
Participant #26	1	Why There will be an affect only if women are being held back in other areas. Woman, along with the black community have had a long road to becoming truly equal.
Participant #27		
Participant #28		
Participant #29		
Participant #30		
Participant #31	1	Women are filling the role as heads of households and raising children who need structure.
Participant #32		
Participant #33		
Participant #34		
Participant #35		1 We are all missionaries and disciples of Christ.
Participant #36		
Participant #37	1	Most of the black Baptist churchs are made up of women, and women care for the children. If the children stop coming our church will disappear.
Participant #38	1	If God is pelased with giving them a message, no one should deny them from doing God's plan.
Participant #39	1	They are the glue in the church and the motivators.
Participant #40		
Participant #41	1	They might have a vision as well as other people. Not only men follow God's word.
	13	1
	1	0.1

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y N	Why
Kansas City, Kansas		
Cunnie Lee Randle		
Birnes L. Penix	1	There are more women than men in the church, and God uses those who offer themselves to him.
Bernadine Randle	1	Black women are more willing to lead than men.
Taailb-ud-Din al-Ansare	1	Women find respect, honor and opportunity for leadership found in the Quran. Natural differences between genders are complimentary. Parallel leadership positions exist in male and female sectors. The rejected stone (women) rejected in one faith have become the cornerstone uplifted by others.
Tri Duong	1	Ministers will not be judged by race but by faith.
John J. Bertrand	1	Men use the bible to put down and limit the role of women in the church, just as the church has used scriptures to put down any group they don't like or approve of. This "scripture proofing" has provided justification for many evils down through the centuries.
Rev. Isaac Ruffin		
Sarah L. Harris	1	It could stifle the cause of Christ.
	5	1
	1	0.2

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y	N Why
St. John (Springfield)		
Reva Hutchins	1	By nature the female is more nurturing and a caregiver. Both male and female contributions should prevail. When all people contribute, the community benefits. Leadership should not be forced and limited.
Linda Strider	1	Women can relate to women through their problems/experiences in the world. Women are called to spread the Gospel to everyone. Men can't relate to women and their life experiences.
Brenda Kerta	1	Because of the lack of male participation and leadership, I feel the cause of Christ would be greatly hindered if women didn't step up and minister in the church and the community.
Patricia Ratchford Londa Holliday	1 1	God's word said that men are over women.
A. K. Luwmes		
Dorothy Higgenbottom Veatrice Smith	1	I believe women can and should be used according to the sovereign will of God. God uses anyone or anything he chooses. The communities suffer when men are disobedient to His will.
Mary E. Suggs	1	Women have been the leaders (unspoken) of the church and have supported all aspects of the church. They deserve the recognition and given the chance they should share more.
Susie Crawford	1	Women may come to the point that they are no longer wanted. That, to me, is a shame. Why limit what women can do?
Participant #42 Nuke Jerez		
Mary E. Miller V. Moore	1 1	You can't hold back or hinder the calling of God. He is in control of everything. God should not be censored. This would happen by denying women the opportunity to contribute to the growth of His kingdom.
Brock D. Sibles Elizabeth Galloway Yvonne Owens Patricia Stinnett	1	Cease investment of people into God's kingdom. Further research is required to answer this question.
Craig Mulligan Hope Gordan	1	By limiting women preachers, the advancement of God's kingdom would be lessened.
Betty Todd		
Keith Stinnett Eric Collins	1	

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y	N
Why		
Brian Stroder	1	
Donna Freeman	1	
Robert Freeman	1	
Peggy Jones	1	
Kateesta Stinnett	1	
Jessie Shropshire	1	
Nashae Davis	1	
Shirley Crawford		
Tina Okishi	1	
Stephen Williams	1	
Eugenia Riggins	1	
Vicki Crow	1	
Joy Worham	1	
Christopher Blake	1	
Kara Hill	1	
Thomas C. Blake	1	
Gene Bell	1	
Brian Keith	1	
Mildred Archle	1	
Mary C. Burley		
Virginia Lewis		
Melanie Williams		
Toleka Thomas		
Participant #43	1	

Mostly. Our men are absent from church. The women are. Mostly, raising our children alone.

Women have been leads in all phases of community work. If our community knew that women were not allowed to participate in leadership roles in the church, how much respect would they get in the community?
This would be discrimination. If women were continuously denied those rights, they could stray away from faith.
Setting limits in the church does not affect the woman's ability to function in the community.
Black women assume leadership in the community using their communication, nurturing and leadership skills.
It could prevent women from coming to church. Some women could feel that they are being discriminated against.

There is a lack of black fathers. Children need to hear the word of God.
It could affect the black community. Women play an important part economically and spiritually.

Women have a lot to offer.
It would only show that women are not being treated as equals. Even though the man is head, we should still have a place.
It could. I believe that a woman of any race could be called by God. Who are we to say?
They may have been called by God.
Women have a lot of gifts to share.
We don't have men qualified or willing.
It may, based upon the fact that the church should be accepting of all people that are quipped to be in those positions.
Women receive the calling and pursue careers in this field. The pulpit is not the only field of ministry.

The leadership in the church should reflect the make-up of the leadership in the community.

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y	N
Shae Callahan		Why
Mrs. Irene Davenport		
Myra R. Blake		
Dian Shropshire	1	1
Nikki Callahan	1	1
Ernest Brown Sr.	1	1
Pamela Young	1	1
Arlin Tolliver, Sr.	1	1
Byron Benning	1	1
Kisha Williams	1	1
	33	4
	1	0.1

Women are the minister outside to the pulpit. All are to minister in Jesus' name.

The community of God is greater than the black community. God will use a woman in the role of leader, but it won't be the same way that God will use a man.

A woman can uphold the same ritual as a man. A man works better in stride with the Lord in the Baptist belief only.

One gender cannot reach everybody. It takes a variety of people.

Women have been the heart for all African American church. They are the hardest workers, most committed, and the most generous towards giving.

I believe that God is sovereign and can do whatever He deems necessary. Denying a woman may do harm to the church in as much as God gives a word also. I believe that the calling to be a pastor is for a man. We, as women, are to assist or come along side our husbands.

Women have held the church together. I see a change occurring in which men will start to assume more leadership roles.

A woman can hold leadership positions and have a lot to bring to the teaching of the word.

Women are knowledgeable and should be able to share the word. The belief of some ministers that do not believe in women preachers should not dictate how the rest of the world feels about the issue.

Name	Com'ty	
Question #1	#18	
	Y	N
Why		
Conference		
Larry George	1	There are many ministries suffering in the church, because of the hindrance of owmen from using the gifts for the upbuilding of the reign of God.
Dorothy G.	1	Black women have contributed to the teaching of black and white men. Women should be allowed to do whatever it takes to spread the word of God.
Caroline Hollingsworth	1	It could grieve and quench the spirit from many towards God's purpose.
Jerard Wilson	1	
Sylvia Mosley	1	Who better to reach woen than another woman.
Bryant Graham	1	
Alicia Williams	1	Before Conference
Aaron Henderson	1	After Conference
Veronic M. Sample	1	Black women's role in the church is essential. As to whether or not it will hinder by not letting them prerach, the Lord will ensure the growth of the church.
Rev. Norman Bradille	1	
Rev. Camille Still	1	
Junior Greenlee		
Karen Durgans		Before Conference
Karen Durgans (After)		After Conference
Mary Willett	1	I think the black community is not concerned regarding the issue, because the church has not reached out to the community for its opinion.
Lillie Wright		
Rhonda Harris	1	Before Conference
Mary G. Simpson	1	After Conference
Anita Pitts	1	It will and it does affect the balck community. Historically, women have been the cement that holds the black community together.
Anita Pitts (After)	1	
Gloria Dillon	1	
Kisha Williams		
Jerrle McGill	1	

Name	Com'ty		
Question #1	#18		
	Y	N	Why
Robyn Henry	1		The black community's view of the church is skewed unless they know the Lord. It is our job to introduce them to Jesus Christ so they can understand from a spiritual/biblical perspective. As Christians, we are still struggling with this issue, but we should not let this struggle stand in the way of witnessing. This struggle should not divide us.
James Nooks (Before)	1		If the person is affected negatively, there could be an affect to the community. In some cases the person will react positively in the community, where their talents are welcomed and appreciated.
James Nooks (After)	1		If the person is affected negatively, there could be an affect to the community. In some cases the person will react positively in the community, where their talents are welcomed and appreciated.
K. Cunningham	1		It's simply God's call. Our thoughts and traditions stifle the move of God. All of God's people and their giftings are critical.
Alicia Williams (After)	1		
	21	1	
	1	0	
	72	7	
	1	0.1	
Total			

Name	Com'ty		
Question #1	#18	Y	N
First Baptist (in Conference Numbers)			
Kisha Williams Ramee Linton	1		
	The majority of church goers are women. A lot of those woernn hold some type of leadership role that goes beyond the church walls. A lot of these women are the reason why communities are united, cleaned up and well taken care of. Some of these women are the reason why some black men are not in jail. Limiting the contributions of women in the church could devastate the black community.		
Amy Nooks	1		
	I believe that limiting anyone from doing what God has called them to do affects the body of Christ. God has given each member specific roles. When they do not function correctly, the entire body suffers.		
	Before Conference		
	After Conference		
Anita Pitts Anita Pitts (After) Mary G. Simpson Karen Durgans Karen Durgans (After) Mary Willett	1		
	Before Conference		
	After Conference		
	I think the black community is not concerned regarding the issue, because the church has not reached out to the community for its opinion.		
James Nooks	1		
	If the person is affected negatively, there could be an affect to the community. In some cases the person will react positively in the community, where their talent are welcomed and appreciated.		
Robyn Henry	1		
	The black community's view of the church is skewed unless they know the Lord. It is our job to introduce them to Jesus Christo they can understand from a spiritual/biblical perspective. As Christians, we are still struggling with this issue, but we should not let this struggle stand in the way of witnessing. This struggle should not divide us.		
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		1	0.1

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